Bonhote (E.)

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TO

THE MOST NOBLE

CHARLES DUKE OF NORFOLK,

WHOSE URBANITY AND PHILANTHROPY

MUST EVER REFLECT

ADDITIONAL HONOURS

ON THE NAME OF

H O W A R D;

BY WHOSE NOBLE FAMILY

BUNGAY CASTLE

WAS POSSESSED FOR MANY CENTURIES;

THE FOLLOWING PAGES

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS GRACE'S MOST OBEDIENT,

AND VERY HUMBLE SERVANT,

ELIZ. BONHOTE.

Bungay, 1797.

BRITISH MUSEUM

INTRODUCTION.

CASTLE-Building appears to have been the paſſion of all ages; while ſome have been raiſing their fabrics on the moſt ſolid and laſting foundations, others have been forming them in the air, where the ſtructure has been erected with infinitely leſs trouble, as their own invention led them to wiſh, and very pleaſant, no doubt, was the deluſion of the moment.

It is now the prevailing taſte to read wonderful tales of wonderful caſtles; to recall them from the oblivion of

ages, and repreſent them as the Noveliſt finds moſt ſuitable to the circumſtances of his tale. In times like theſe, every book that ſerves to amuſe the mind, and withdraw the attention from ſcenes of real diſtreſs, without inflaming the paſſions, or corrupting the heart, muſt ſurely be as acceptable to the reader as it may have been found pleaſant to the writer, and ſhould exempt the latter from the ſeverity of criticiſm. Under the influence of this opinion, the Author of the following ſheets has been tempted to ſend them into the world. She might, indeed, to evade the danger of having her work condemned, pretend to have found it in ſome receſs of her favourite ruins, or to have diſcovered it artfully concealed in the bottom of an old cheſt, in ſo defaced and mutilated a condition, as to have rendered it a very difficult and laborious taſk to collect the

fragments

fragments and modernize the language: but the writer of theſe pages has not been ſo fortunate; and, had ſhe attempted to aſſert ſo marvellous a circumſtance, ſhe could not have expected any miſs of fifteen would have been credulous enough to believe her.

The thought of publiſhing a novel, under the title given to theſe volumes, has long been her intention,—a thought which originated from her living within the diſtance of twenty yards from thoſe venerable ruins, which ſtill attract the attention of the ſtranger and the curious. Often in early youth has ſhe climbed their loftieſt ſummits, and liſtened with pleaſed and captivated attention to the unaccountable tales related by the old and ſuperſtitious, and conſidered as real by herſelf and her inexperienced companions.—

In one place, it was ſaid the ghoſt of an ancient warrior, clad in armour, took his nightly round to reconnoitre ſcenes endeared by many a tender claim. In another, a lovely female form had been ſeen to glide along, and was ſuppoſed to diſappear on the very ſpot where it was imagined her lover had fallen a victim to the contentions of the times.

"Her face was like an April ſky
"Dimm'd by a ſcatt'ring cloud;
"Her clay-cold lily hand, knee-high,
"Held up her ſable ſhroud."

All theſe circumſtances added ſtrength to a romantic turn of mind, which acquired additional force from a love of reading the old romances, and this propenſity for the marvellous was for ſome time indulged in the midſt of ſcenes which afforded ample ſcope for the

the creative excurſions of fancy. After having left her paternal dwelling many years, ſhe is again replaced in it by ſome of thoſe changes which ſo frequently occur in the progreſs of human life; and has purchaſed the little ſpot of ground on which ſtands the principal part of all that now remains of Bungay Caſtle, and which, though a mere heap of unconnected ruins, are ſtill ſo venerable as to excite, in the feeling and thoughtful mind, a ſympathetic regret at the inſtability of human grandeur and the weakneſs of human ſtrength.

Among theſe ruins, once the property, and, in all probability, the temporary reſidence, of the noble houſe of Norfolk, cottages are now built, and inhabited by many poor families, and

and thoſe very walls, which perhaps ſheltered royalty, are now the ſupporters of miſerable hovels. Such are the awful effects of time, and the unaccountable revolutions it produces!

But, were it in the Author's power as much as it is her inclination, ſhe would adorn their venerable remains with all the flowers of ſpring, and the tempting treaſures of autumn ſhould ſurround them. The jeſſamine and honey-ſuckle ſhould claſp them in their embraces, and the tendrils of the vine and the fig-tree ſhould encircle and decorate them with their luſcious ſweets. She would, on the loftieſt corner of their remains, build herſelf a little hut, in which ſhe could ſit and contemplate the variegated ſcenes around. She would

reverſe

reverſe the order of things, and render them as lovely and beautiful in age, as they were grand and magnificent before time had robbed them of thoſe envied and valuable properties which it cannot reſtore.

Being again in the habit of ſpending many leiſure hours in this favourite ſpot, endeared to her for bringing to remembrance the enlivening ſcenes of youth, and, having opportunities to purſue her ſedentary amuſements, ſhe determined to accompliſh her deſign, ſeeing no reaſon why Bungay Caſtle ſhould not be as good a foundation for the ſtructure of a novel as any other edifice within or without the kingdom. But, as ſo many ages are elapſed ſince this Caſtle was reared, and ſince time and death have ſwept away with ruthleſs hand almoſt every veſtige

veſtige of what it once was, ſhe has to lament, and ſo perhaps may her readers, that ſhe was furniſhed for this employment with no other materials than the ſcanty portion her own imagination afforded. She has borrowed ſome real names, and ſhe hopes the characters ſhe has introduced will be found neither diſguſting nor unnatural. But, as Solomon ſo many centuries ago declared, there was nothing *new* under the ſun, ſhe cannot ſurely be condemned for not producing new characters, nor blamed if any contained in this work reſemble thoſe of the preſent day; and, though in the reigns of our firſt ſovereigns, and many of their ſucceſſors, the cuſtoms and manners of the people were ſomewhat different, ſhe is convinced the world was in many inſtances juſt the ſame. The ſame virtues, vices, and paſſions, degraded

ded or ennobled human nature; and, though delicacy, ſenſibility, and refinement might be leſs known, and not ſo frequently mentioned, they no doubt retained as proper and powerful an influence over the mind. Love too, that invincible and all-ſubduing paſſion, implanted in the heart of man from the beginning of the world, was as generally known and acknowledged by the king and the peaſant, the hero and the coward.

This painfully leads to an obſervation, which, while it is humiliating, has too much truth for its foundation to admit of diſpute, that, though the ſame vices which diſgrace the preſent times were practiſed in the earlieſt ages, more pains were then taken to conceal them from public obſervation, and the conduct, of which

which the modern fine gentleman or avowed debauchee will now proudly boaſt, would then have been conſidered as ſufficient to ſtamp the character with indelible infamy. By our unfaſhionable progenitors modeſty was diſtinguiſhed and admired as the moſt becoming ornament of woman; adultery was puniſhed, and ſeduction held in contempt; the artful betrayer of unſuſpecting innocence was pointed at by the finger of deriſion, and the victim of baſeneſs compelled to conceal her ſhame either in the ſhades of retirement or the ſecluſion of a nunnery. We may juſtly lament, if we are not permitted to condemn, that in this reſpect the preſent age is not quite ſo ſenſitive, and may ſhed the tear of regret at being ſo often forced to look down with pity, when we meet, at almoſt every corner of our ſtreets, the unbluſhing

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front of degraded beauty, and our ears are ſhocked with the execrations of profligacy from lips that in early life had been taught to ſpeak a language as pure as their own uncontaminated hearts.

The Author of theſe pages has not attempted to enter on the politics of the paſt or preſent times. Had ſhe ever cheriſhed ſuch a deſign, the ſentiments of one of the firſt* and moſt intereſting writers this age has produced, would inſtantly have determined her to decline her intention, but ſhe has ever thought that ſo heterogeneous a mixture was not likely to pleaſe the taſte of many readers, and that a novel was never intended as a vehicle for politics, any farther than it was neceſſary for the elucidation of the ſtory. Firmly attached to her King,

* Mr. Cumberland.

perfectly ſatisfied with our laws and conſtitution, and grateful to heaven for being permitted to live under ſo mild and juſt a government. In a country where freedom and plenty have hitherto taken their ſtations, and ſhed their moſt benign influence, ſhe will ever remain contented to leave politics and the affairs of ſtate to be ſettled by better, wiſer, and more experienced heads.

Gentle reader, we will now enter upon a ſtory, of whoſe origin you are informed. If any, who ſit down to read it with minds tortured by mental or bodily diſeaſes, ſhould find a temporary relief from miſery or languor, the Author will conſider it as a luxuriant reward for her employment. If, on the contrary, they ſhould be diſappointed, or diſſatisfied, ſhe ſincerely wiſhes they may meet a

more agreeable entertainment from the next publication thrown in their way.

To the Reviewers ſhe takes this opportunity of publicly making her acknowledgments for the liberality and candour they have invariably ſhewn to her former publications; and, though ſhe has never had the ſatisfaction of being perſonally known to any one of them, ſhe has for many years conſidered them as friends.

Hannah Hill,

BUNGAY

Cottage

BUNGAY CASTLE.

CHAP. I.

DURING the bloody period of the Barons' wars, when civil diſcord threw her fire-brands around, to lay waſte and make deſolate the fertile plains and fruitful fields of this long envied country; when the widow mourned the huſband torn from her embraces, and the orphan wandered friendleſs and unprotected; when brother waged war againſt brother, and the parent raiſed his arm to deſtroy the ſon he had

reared and cheriſhed ; when every caſtle was kept in a ſtate of the moſt guarded defence, leſt it ſhould be wreſted from its owner by the ambition and enmity of his neighbour : —then it was that *Bungay Caſtle* reared its proud towers and battlements aloft ; while its maſſy walls ſtood in gloomy and majeſtic grandeur, as if they could bid defiance to every deſign formed againſt them by man, and to the more certain influence of all-conquering time ; ſo perfectly ſtupendous and ſtrong was this once-ſpacious edifice, it was not only an object of deſire to the proud and aſpiring barons, but, it has been ſaid, even to contending kings.

The noble and loyal lord of this caſtle, being called upon to fill ſome important office in the ſervice of the ſtate, appointed Sir Philip de Morney to be governor during his abſence, and never had he ſhewn the goodneſs of his heart and the excellence of his judgment more than in the delegation of his power and authority over ſo numerous a train

train of vaſſals and dependents to this his boſom friend.

Sir Philip de Morney was a bold and hardy veteran: he was grown grey in the ſervice of his king and country; brave in the field, juſt, merciful, and benevolent, in his dealings with all his fellow-creatures,—poſſeſſed of an abundant fortune, he accepted this important truſt to oblige his friend, and promote the happineſs of thoſe to whom he knew he was attached;—fond of an active and uſeful life, he wiſhed not to ſink into indolence or obſcurity, till the infirmities of age ſhould render him incapable of taking his ſhare in the buſy ſcenes of that important period, in which, though the pernicious doctrine of equality did not influence the minds of the vulgar againſt their lawful ſovereign, or the rights of the ſubject, the ambition of the nobility, and the feuds and diſtraction of the contending parties, produced ſcenes of miſery equally diſtreſſing, but happily not ſo extenſive in their effects.

Into Bungay Caſtle he removed with his whole family, and there for ſome years found that happineſs he had vainly ſought in more enlivening ſcenes; and there he taſted thoſe ſerene and contented pleaſures he had been unable to procure in the world; though formed to make a brilliant figure on its great ſtage, he had every endowment of the mind for the true enjoyment of domeſtic life, uniting with the moſt unſhaken courage the gentleſt philanthropy. He had married at the age of thirty-five a lady much younger than himſelf, by whom he had ſeveral children, and looked forward with the hope of being the parent of a more numerous offspring, while, like the patriarchs of old, he lived reſpected and revered in the boſom of his family. Ah! little did he ſuſpect the revolution ambition would one day make in his mind.

Lady de Morney was yet in the pride of life; her beauty unfaded, her ſpirits lively, and her mind in its full vigour; her perſon was lovely, her diſpoſition amiable: ſweetneſs, modeſty, truth, and fortitude, were the

the inmates of her boſom, and gave additional graces to the eaſe and elegance of her manners: ſtrictly exemplary in performing the important duties of wife and mother, no complaints were heard where ſhe preſided; no looks of diſcontent were ſeen on the countenance of her dependents: time was neither abuſed nor found a burden; her whole ſtudy and attention were employed to promote the happineſs of her huſband, and to ſuperintend the education of her children; for the latter employment no one was more adequate than herſelf,—her own example ſerving more than precept to enforce the leſſons of truth on the ductile mind of youth; her own gentleneſs made them happy, while her conduct convinced them of the value and dignity of virtue.

She conſidered youth and innocence as the moſt valuable of earthly treaſures, and ſhe was not more anxious to preſerve the one in all its native purity, than to teach them how to enjoy the other with cheerfulneſs and

gratitude: having ſtored their minds with virtuous precepts, beſt calculated to chain the attention, and which ſhe hoped would lay the moſt ſolid foundation for ſecuring their future happineſs, ſhe lived with her children in habits of the moſt ſoothing and perfect friendſhip, and very ſeldom was under the unpleaſant neceſſity of aſſuming the ſtern authority of a dictatorial parent.

But, as no character on earth can be found without having ſome of the weakneſs and frailty of erring mortality annexed to it, the author does not mean to preſent Lady de Morney to their view as a being entirely faultleſs. She was vain of her high birth, being allied to nobility; and ſo partial to her eldeſt ſon, that ſhe could ſcarcely ſuffer him to be out of her ſight; yet her partiality originated from a circumſtance ſo intereſting and affecting to all who knew it, that, though it might by ſome be conſidered as a weakneſs, it was by none but herſelf condemned as a fault. When her ſon was

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in his infancy, ſhe was ſeized with a fever of ſo malignant a nature, as deprived her for ſome weeks of her ſenſes: during this diſtreſſing period of her delirium, and in the abſence of her nurſe, ſhe one day ſnatched the infant from the arms of a young woman, his attendant, and, before any one was aware of her deſign, ran out of the houſe, and with almoſt incredible ſwiftneſs down a long gravel walk to the bottom of the garden, and threw him into a lake, by which it was bounded. By the fortunate and timely aſſiſtance of an old and faithful ſervant, who was luckily at work near the ſpot, and who had haſtened to it on ſeeing his lady ſo unexpectedly make her appearance, the family were alarmed, and the child providentially, but with difficulty, ſaved.

This incident, of which ſhe was unguardedly informed, made ſo forcible an impreſſion on the mind of this ſuſceptible and affectionate parent, as ſhe could not ſhake off: it created an additional claim upon her

heart for every tender indulgence, and gave to every juvenile action and good quality redoubled value. He had in a manner been raiſed from death, reſcued from a watery grave, into which her own, a mother's, hand had hurled him; and yet he loved her, as her fond and plaintive partiality led her often to imagine, better than the reſt of her children. She would ſometimes embrace this darling ſon, and, with all the enthuſiaſm of maternal tenderneſs, tremble at the horrid remembrance of having ſo nearly deprived him of an exiſtence that added ſo much to the happineſs of her own. To all her children Lady de Morney was an indulgent parent; but for Edwin ſhe felt that indeſcribable fondneſs which not only threw a veil over his failings, but robbed her of that fortitude and energy with which ſhe acted on all other occaſions. So far from attempting to deny any requeſt he made, it was her ſtudy to prevent his wiſhes. She would at times apologize to the reſt of her children for the extreme affection nature had

had implanted, and which ſhe could not help cheriſhing for their brother, but which ſhe regretted as a weakneſs ſhe was unable to conquer. This conduct ſerved to reconcile the young people to a partiality which originated from ſo ſingular and awful an incident, and, ſo far from ſhewing either envy or regret, it ſeemed to endear their mother's favourite to their youthful and guileleſs hearts. Another circumſtance, which equally helped to reconcile them, was the ſweetneſs of Edwin's diſpoſition, who as often availed himſelf of his mother's indulgence to gratify and make them happy, as he did to obtain any of her favours for himſelf.

In a ſituation from which thouſands of her ſex and age would have ſhrunk diſguſted and affrighted, Lady de Morney was cheerful and contented. The rooms were Gothic and gloomy, but her huſband and children enlivened every place they inhabited. She was at times ſurrounded by and expoſed to

dangers; but her beloved De Morney and his faithful people were ever near to protect and guard her. She was the wife of a noble ſoldier, and ſhe had acquired a fortitude almoſt equal to his from the knowledge of his unfailing courage, which gained energy from danger, and redoubled ardour from difficulty.

The caſtle itſelf could boaſt few internal beauties, but her children, whom ſhe ſaw playful as youthful fawns, and happy as health, innocence, and unbroken ſpirits, could make them, were treaſures inexhauſtible: they beheld the rough implements of war without terror or diſmay, inſtructed by their father to conſider them as the only ornaments fitted for a ſoldier. The young De Morneys were taught the uſe of arms as ſoon as they had learned to walk.

Seldom were the Gothic gates of the caſtle unbarred to admit the ſocial friend or gay companion to the feſtive board; ſeldom did the

the voice of mirth and jollity echo through the lofty rooms and vaulted paſſages; but a ſweet ſerenity ſupplied their place, which, having loſt during the abſence of her huſband, at an early period of her marriage, Lady de Morney now felt the full value of poſſeſſing; and, though ſecluded from the gaudy pleaſures of a court, ſhe felt herſelf a gainer by the exchange in the balance of happineſs.——Lady de Morney had a ſiſter, who was placed by the Lady Gundreda as ſuperior in the nunnery of Bungay; with her ſhe ſpent many of her leiſure hours: between them the tendereſt friendſhip ſtrengthened the endearing ties in which they were united by nature.

The abbeſs was a pious, but yet ſhe was a young and intereſting woman, of a benevolent and placid diſpoſition; and, though ſhe had voluntarily ſecluded herſelf from the world, ſhe was not ſo much diſguſted with its pleaſures as ſhe felt herſelf wounded by the ſeverity of its diſappointments.—

Early in life, death had deprived her of a lover who had engaged her moſt animated and ardent affection, and with whom ſhe had indulged the fond hope of being united in the indiſſoluble bands of Hymen; but adverſe fate had ordained it otherwiſe, and thoſe virtues and good qualities which had made him inexpreſſibly dear to her, rendered his loſs the more exquiſitely painful. With him the world loſt all its power to charm, and ſhe reſolutely determined to fly that world for ever, and never to permit another lover to diſplace the ſainted Henry from her heart; ſhe therefore unreluctantly withdrew from the varying and buſy ſcenes of life,—not to avoid temptation, but to be able to indulge, in the gloomy ſhades of a nunnery, the memory of a man, to whoſe worth and conſtancy ſhe deemed no ſacrifice too great. Time ſerved to convince her of the wiſdom of her choice; and, giving way to all the luxury of a pure but romantic imagination, ſhe encouraged the conſoling hope, that, if her regretted Henry were permitted

permitted to know what was acting in this lower world, his ſpirit would be gratified by the purity of her choice, and his heart convinced of the unabating ſtrength of her affection. She often flattered herſelf that her Henry was deputed to watch her conduct, and would be the firſt to convey her to the bright regions of immortality; yet, though thus ſeverely tried in the leſſons of affliction, ſhe troubled no one with a repetion of her ſorrows; and, though ſhe often wept in all the bitterneſs of anguiſh, her tears fell when no one obſerved them, and only to the ear of her ſympathizing ſiſter did ſhe venture to mention a name ſo dear and ſo beloved.

Young Edwin de Morney, whom we have already mentioned, was at this period in his ſeventeenth year; and, notwithſtanding the unbounded indulgence of his mother, he had made a rapid proficiency in every part of his education. Nature had been equally liberal of her favours to his mind and perſon: his

his temper was good,—his manners and converſation thoſe of the gentleman and the ſcholar, and, with all the intereſting gaiety and natural cheerfulneſs of youth, he united a benevolent and ſuſceptible heart.

His eldeſt ſiſter, Roſeline, was only one year younger than himſelf; her form was ſmall, but ſymmetry itſelf, every limb ſo nicely turned, it would have been choſen by a ſtatuary for the model of a Venus: her face was beautiful in the extreme; her eyes expreſſive and ſparkling, and the ſmile which ſhewed itſelf was of that irreſiſtible kind as caught the attention and won the heart; and it would have been difficult for a connoiſſeur in beauty to point out which feature it was that had the greateſt claim to admiration, while the unfading and faſcinating beauties of her poliſhed mind, which was ſtored with all the graces the beſt education could beſtow, or the moſt lively genius acquire, rendered her converſation as delightful as her manners were captivating.

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She played on the lute, and warbled her artleſs ſong in ſtrains ſo ſweet, as would have rivalled the daughters of Italy. Her heart, unwounded by the barbed thorn of affliction, and free from the entanglements of love, was like one of the firſt days of infant-ſpring, which, enlivened by the bright rays of an unclouded and all-cheering ſun, ſerves not only to revive, but to embelliſh the whole face of inanimate nature, juſt burſting into life, and rendering all its ſweetly modeſt beauties of redoubled value to thoſe who had lingered through a dreary winter, in eager expectation of its approach. Lively as the birds which hovered round the turrets of the caſtle, ſhe entered gaily into all the youthful ſports of her brothers and ſiſters. To the little blooming Edeliza ſhe was particularly attached; and, though ſhe ſaw her as beautiful as herſelf, felt neither envy nor regret in the reflection. No modiſh complaints filled her with imaginary terrors, and, as ſhe had known no ſorrows, ſhe thought it not only incumbent on her to

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ſhew her gratitude to heaven and her parents, but to ſoften, by every benevolent attention in her power, the miſeries and misfortunes of others.

In thoſe days, the education of young women was completed at a more early period than in the preſent; and, if the manners were not altogether ſo highly finiſhed, or the mind ſo profuſely decorated, or rather fettered, with innumerable, and, to too many, uſeleſs accompliſhments, the time was undoubtedly more rationally employed, and the fair ſex leſs expoſed to the allurements of flattery and the dangers of temptation: though more retired in their habits, and reſerved in their manners, they were neither leſs ſuſceptible of the tender paſſions, nor leſs fervent or ſincere in their attachments.

Roſeline had formed an early friendſhip with a young lady educated in the Bungay nunnery, of which her aunt, fortunately for the

the young people, was the ſuperior. This ſweet victim of ambition was deſigned by a proud and haughty father for the monaſtic life, in order to enable him to provide more liberally for the reſt of his children. She had not yet however entered on the year of her novitiate; but it was ſoon to commence, and, at its awful cloſe, ſhe was to bid a final adieu to that world, to which her heart had of late become too tenderly and anxiouſly attached. As it approached, time ſeemed to wing his flight with redoubled rapidity, and ſhe felt a trembling dread that her fortitude, like a falſe friend, would forſake her in the hour of trial, and a trembling preſentiment that the moment, which ſhut her from the ſociety at the caſtle, would exclude her from every proſpect of happineſs; yet this repugnance to obey the will of her parents was new to her mind:—ſhe dared not inveſtigate the cauſe too nicely, leſt ſhe ſhould find a ſubject for ſelf-condemnation. She found, with painful regret, a troubleſome gueſt was admitted to her

her boſom, and ſhe was afraid, in attempting to become more intimately acquainted with its prevailing influence, ſhe ſhould permit the ſtranger to gain greater aſcendancy.

The youthful Madeline, on her firſt entrance into the nunnery, had neither felt nor ſhewn any diſcontent: ſhe had aſſumed the formal and unbecoming habit without a ſigh, and yielded to the rigid rules preſcribed with uncomplaining reſignation; but, as time crept on with ſolemn and leaden pace, unrelieved by any of the innocent amuſements of ſocial life, only to repeat and bring forward the ſame dull round of gloomy and mortifying ſcenes, not only repugnant to the feelings of nature, but diſguſting to the ſenſes, ſhe began to think and to complain to the boſom of friendſhip, that thoſe fetters, put on by the rigid will of unfeeling parents, to be finally cloſed by the iron laws of bigotry and ſuperſtition, were unjuſt and galling, and the free-born ſoul of innocence

cence and virtue drooped and pined beneath the ſacred walls by which it was incloſed ;—how cruel to make religion a pretext for ſuch perſecution and miſery, and to counteract the deſigns of the Creator, who never formed his creatures for ſecluſion from that world in which he had profuſely ſtrewn ſo many bleſſings for the enjoyment of rational and ſocial beings !

Roſeline, by the urgency of her entreaties, frequently obtained leave of the abbeſs for Madeline de Glanville to viſit at the caſtle. This favour was the more readily granted, from her having obſerved with real regret that ſome ſecret grief preyed on the mind of her young charge, which, though ſhe could not help commiſerating, ſhe did not chooſe to mention. Thoſe days, which the fair Madeline ſpent at the caſtle, were the happieſt ſhe had ever known ; while there, ſhe was gay and cheerful as the youthful companions who ſtudied to amuſe and entertain her. The ſong, the dance, the lute,

drove

drove from her remembrance the gloomy nunnery in which ſhe was condemned to waſte and linger out her future life.

Sir Philip and Lady de Morney treated her with the tenderneſs and indulgence of parents; the friendſhip and affection between her and Roſeline was mutual and ſincere; for Edwin ſhe felt, as ſhe innocently ſuppoſed, the fond regard of a ſiſter. All the younger branches of the De Morney family rejoiced to ſee her, and gladly aſſiſted in rendering her happy; and when the hour arrived for the unfortunate Madeline to return to the nunnery, whilſt ſhe obſerved with ſecret gratitude the gloom it threw on the countenances of her friends, it gave additional pangs to the feelings of her own heart; her ſpirits inſtantly deſerted her, and tears of unfeigned regret marked the ſad moment of departure. When ſhe re-entered her ſolitary cell, ſhe would ſink into a deſpondency which the auſtere rules of the order was not likely to conquer.

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The inhabitants of the caſtle and its environs were in themſelves a little commonwealth, which contained a vaſt variety of characters. Men of different nations were met together, and, by the unaccountable effects of accident, ambition, or neceſſity, brought into the ſame habits, and lived cordially together, ſerving one maſter; and, united by one cauſe and intereſt, the utmoſt harmony prevailed among them; for Sir Philip de Morney was a juſt and active governor; gentle as the lamb, and forgiving as mercy to the virtuous or injured,—but a terror and a ſtern maſter to the traitor or oppreſſor, whether friend or foe: he knew the importance of his ſituation, and how much the happineſs of others depended on the careful and faithful diſcharge of thoſe duties belonging to his high ſtation, and intruſted to him by his noble friend the Earl of Norfolk; he therefore wiſely and juſtly determined not to be biaſſed nor miſled, either by the partiality or deſigns of others

other men, nor to ſuffer any prejudice to gain aſcendancy over his mind in the rewards he beſtowed, or the puniſhments which guilt would ſometimes compel him to inflict.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

IN the middle of a cold and inclement winter's night, when the wind blew with uncontrolable force, and the ſnow, rain, and hail beat with fury againſt the windows, every inſtant breaking ſome of the few panes which admitted a ſcanty light into the inferior apartments, and threatened to demoliſh thoſe of the ſtate-rooms, while nature appeared to ſhudder at this unuſual warring of the elements, the centinels on guard were alarmed by a loud rapping at the weſtern gate, and the rumbling of a carriage, with

with the clattering of horſes' hoofs was diſtinctly heard. For ſome moments the people ſtood irreſolute; at length one of the ſoldiers roughly inquired who it was wanted admittance at ſo unſeaſonable an hour, when only treaſon or treachery could be ſuſpected.

A voice replied, "We are no traitors; we come with no hoſtile intentions, but have brought diſpatches of the utmoſt importance to the governor, and muſt beg to be immediately admitted, as we are in danger of periſhing from fatigue and the ſeverity of the weather." This anſwer cauſed a general buſtle; the governor was ſummoned, and the troops, lodged within the interior parts of the caſtle, ordered to arms before the gate was thrown open; nor were the ſtrangers permitted to enter till their number was aſcertained, and the ſoldiers prepared to oppoſe them, ſhould they have any bad deſigns to accompliſh by this ſtrange and ſuſpicious viſit; but the alarm ſoon ſubſided, and the ſoldiers almoſt tempted to

laugh at their own fears, when they ſaw a carriage draw up to the gate, guarded by about twenty men, out of which they took a perſon who appeared quite paſſive, and was ſo muffled up, that, in the hurry which was made uſe of to convey him into the governor's apartment, it was impoſſible to diſcover either his age or perſon. The governor, after reading the diſpatches, withdrew with the priſoner and two of the people, who appeared to have the command and direction of this myſterious expedition.—

Refreſhments were ordered for the travellers, and beds made up for them in the barracks; but the governor had a long conference with the gentlemen before they ſeparated. In the middle of the following night they departed from the caſtle with as much ſecrecy, and as little ceremony, as they had entered it, no one appearing deſirous to develop the cauſe which brought them, or daring to aſk any queſtions of the governor,

in whoſe power alone it reſted to ſatisfy their inquiries, as at this time civil commotions and private feuds between the contending nobles were continually ariſing to diſturb the peace of ſociety, and involve the nation in accumulating diſtreſſes; this ſtrange viſit was not only ſilently obſerved, but in a few weeks ſcarcely recollected, even by thoſe who had witneſſed it; and the guards, with only ſilent ſhrugs and ſignificant looks, thought it ſafeſt, wiſeſt, and beſt, to perform with exact attention the diſcharge of their reſpective duties.

At this period of our tale, the joyous feſtival of Chriſtmas was approaching,—a feſtival which our old-faſhioned forefathers welcomed with every mark of grateful and benevolent hoſpitality; and its arrival was beheld with as much complacent and cordial hilarity by the rich and great, as it was with delight and impatience by the poor and needy. While the holly and miſſletoe decorated the kitchens, and the innocent joke

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went round, as the bluſhing maidens received the compliments and good wiſhes of the ſeaſon, the loaded tables ſerved ſtill more to exhilirate their ſpirits, and even the ſtranger and the beggar were invited to taſte the good things they enjoyed.

The youthful inhabitants of the caſtle began to reckon with eager and high-raiſed expectation the days, the hours, and even the minutes, which muſt paſs away before the lovely Madeline, who had obtained permiſſion of the abbeſs to ſpend the Chriſtmas holidays at the caſtle, could join their party. Various plans of pleaſure were formed, which they hoped would be productive of ſuch amuſements as would amply gratify their own wiſhes, and thoſe of their expected viſitors; for Agnes de Clifford, who was a boarder in the nunnery, was to accompany Madeline, by whom and Roſeline ſhe was much beloved. She was a lively intereſting girl, about Miſs de Morney's age, and, next

Madeline, held the higheſt place in her regard.

In reality, the young people at the caſtle were as much confined as thoſe in the nunnery from any intercourſe with the world, Sir Philip de Morney having a decided averſion to the introducing young people early into life; but by the urgent entreaties of his lady, he was now prevailed upon to relax from the ſtrictneſs he had obſerved reſpecting his elder children, four of whom felt a wiſh for a more enlarged ſociety; and, as their father had no deſign of placing any of them in a religious retirement, it began to be time for them to know ſomething of that world in which, in all probability, they muſt take an active part.

The holidays were ſpent in the utmoſt harmony; the feſtivity which reigned in every part of the caſtle ſeemed to have baniſhed ſorrow from its walls. The ſurgeon, captains, and lieutenants, were all of their

parties, and the evenings generally concluded with a dance: their dependents were ſometimes permitted to join the ſet, and the good prieſt, Father Anſelm, who attended the caſtle, would gladly have been a partaker in their innocent amuſements, had not the rigid rules of his ſacred order forbidden ſuch relaxations.

A few days before the young ladies were to return to the nunnery, Madeline was taken ill, and her diſorder increaſed ſo rapidly, it was not only thought dangerous, but found impracticable to remove her with ſafety. For ſome weeks her life was deſpaired of, and, when immediate danger was over, ſhe was left in ſo weak and languid a ſtate, that air and exerciſe were pronounced abſolutely neceſſary to effect a perfect recovery. This ſentence was heard with ſecret delight by the ſuffering Madeline, as ſhe was certain it would procure leave for her longer continuance at the caſtle, and the permiſſion, when obtained, had more effi-

cacy in reſtoring her, than all the medicines ſhe had taken during her illneſs. Edwin and Roſeline, much as they had ſuffered from the alarming indiſpoſition of their loved companion, rejoiced that it had been productive of an indulgence they had almoſt deſpaired of gaining.

As the progreſs of her recovery was ſlow and precarious, many ſymptoms of a decline being viſible, every one was eager and anxious to amuſe the fair invalid, and none appeared more earneſt in their endeavours than Hubert de Willows, captain of the guard, a young man, whoſe wit, vivacity, and unceaſing good humour, had ſo ſtrongly recommended him to the favour and protection of the governor, as had obtained him a conſtant invitation to his table. With a lively imagination, he had a turn for ſatire, ſo pointed, that, while it rendered him a moſt entertaining companion, kept many of his enemies in awe, and he had the merit of never ſhewing his talents at the expence of a friend,

a friend, nor any worthy character; but he conſidered vice and folly as fair game, againſt which he levelled his attacks.

Arthur de Clavering, the acting ſurgeon, was allowed both judgment and humanity. The practice of phyſic and ſurgery was then but obſcurely known, compared with the more enlightened practioners of theſe days. De Clavering, however, patched up many a broken conſtitution. People lived as long, and had fewer diſeaſes, than has been the lot of ſucceeding generations, but, whether this is owing to chance or folly, I leave wiſer heads to determine.

Arthur de Clavering was rather an extraordinary character; his perſon was neither tall nor ſhort; of a thin habit; had a countenance ſo pleaſing, and eyes ſo penetrating, it was impoſſible not to be ſtruck with him, as ſomething beyond the common race of mortals. He had been abroad, had read much, was acquainted with both men and

manners, had a plain and rather awkward addreſs, was ſingular in his expreſſions, and formed his opinions with a juſtneſs and rapidity that aſtoniſhed thoſe with whom he aſſociated; told a number of good anecdotes with a delicacy and humour peculiar to himſelf; public places and general ſociety he avoided ſo cautiouſly, that he was conſidered as a miſanthrope by thoſe who did not know him intimately.

Lieutenant de Huntingfield was a humourous bachelor of forty: he profeſſed himſelf an admirer of the ladies, and pretended to lament that the ſtate of his finances would not permit him to take a wife to his boſom, and increaſe the ancient family of the De Huntingfields, which, he apprehended, if fortune proved averſe to his accompliſhing, would become extinct.

Among the reſt of the officers was a Cambrian youth, who was a general favourite in the caſtle. Hugh Camelford was gay, high ſpirited,

ſpirited, thoughtleſs, and extravagant; but with all ſo generous and good humoured, it was impoſſible not to be pleaſed even with his eccentricities; he rode good horſes, gave good dinners, and was always in good ſpirits. De Clavering and Hugh Camelford were the beſt friends in the world. The doctor, as he was generally called, had once, during ſome indiſpoſition, adviſed him to be bled; but the fiery youth would neither follow his advice nor ſubmit to his entreaties: he was then threatened with death for his obſtinacy.

"In Cot's cood time I am ready to die, (ſaid the invalid;) but, if ever I loſe one drop of my Welch blóot, put in the ſervice of my country, may my coot name be plaſted with the titles of poltroon and coward!"—He ſaved his Welch blood, and recovered, and De Clavering, though at firſt ſomewhat diſpleaſed, treated him as a friend and brother ever afterwards.

There was a ſtill more ſingular character in the caſtle than any yet deſcribed,—Alexander

Elwyn. He was placed there as a ſchool for improvement in tactics and all the relative duties of a ſoldier: he had good connexions, and a genteel allowance, but was a miſer at twenty. This ſordid humour made him the butt of the garriſon, and De Willows, with the reſt of the officers, vowed to laugh him out of a habit as diſguſting as it was unnatural and unneceſſary.

In a few weeks Madeline was ſo far recovered, as to be removed into one of the ſtate-apartments for the benefit of air; an adjoining room was likewiſe fitted up for Roſeline, to ſleep near her friend during her confinement. They generally parted from their attendants as ſoon as the reſt of the family retired. Being one night earneſtly chatting over ſome occurrence that had afforded them pleaſure, they were alarmed by footſteps under their apartment, and a low murmuring ſound of voices indiſtinctly reached their ears. Madeline was a good deal frightened, but Roſeline, who had great preſence of mind,

mind, and more courage, made, or rather appeared to make, very light of the matter, telling her friend the rooms they occupied were, ſhe knew, connected with ſome paſſages and offices belonging to the caſtle, and ſhe doubted not but the noiſe proceeded from the people on duty. This, in ſome degree, abated the fears of Madeline, till, after a profound ſilence of half an hour, they heard a deep groan, followed by the rattling of chains; at the ſame inſtant one of the windows flew open with the greateſt violence, and as inſtantly cloſed again, which was followed by the bell at the corner of the room ringing violently.

Madeline gave a faint ſcream; Roſeline jumped out of bed, and ran for ſome water, ſuppoſing ſhe would have a fainting fit; but ſhe gently put it aſide, and with wild affright inquired what was the matter, and what could occaſion the unaccountable noiſes they had heard. "The wind, and the people in ſome of the lower apartments, no

doubt, (replied her friend;) therefore I beg you would not diſcompoſe yourſelf; if you do, you will compel me to diſturb the family, and that I am afraid would diſpleaſe my father; and, in all probability, Edwin would ridicule our childiſh fears, and the reſt of the gentlemen would laugh at us."

This ſilenced Madeline, and Roſeline continued: "I am totally unacquainted with many parts of this caſtle. I have two or three times wiſhed to explore its ſecret paſſages, look at the dungeons, and viſit all its ſubterranean contrivances, but have been forbidden by my father. Edwin did once promiſe to ſhew me how well we were ſecured from outward danger by the immenſe ſtrength of the fortifications, and equally ſecure of a retreat, ſhould the caſtle be attacked; but he cautioned me not to give a hint of his deſign, either to my father or mother, nor to drop a word of his intentions before my brothers or ſiſters. Eager as I was to have my curioſity ſatisfied, your illneſs,

illneſs, my dear girl, and the pleaſure we counted of partaking during your viſit, drove it from my mind ; but I will take the earlieſt opportunity of claiming my brother's promiſe."

" Defer your deſign of doing ſo till I am ſufficiently recovered to accompany you, (ſaid Madeline faintly,) and pardon the trouble my folly and weakneſs have occaſioned you : this illneſs, I am ſorry to find, has had as much influence on my mental feelings as on my bodily frame ; but, if you will comply with my requeſt, I will endeavour to be more courageous, and get well as faſt as I can."

" Agreed, (cried Roſeline ;) you and I, my dear Madeline, have yet ſeen too little of life to be weary of it, and I truſt our hearts are both too guiltleſs to have any fears of thoſe ſupernatural appearances, of which ſuperſtition and ignorance give ſuch improbable accounts."

" Yet

"Yet I have heard ſtrange tales of this caſtle being haunted, even in the retired receſs to which my adverſe fate has in all probability doomed me to ſpend my hapleſs days, and——"

"You are too much inclined to believe them, (interrupted her friend;) but, my dear Madeline, be aſſured of this,—if we had nothing more to fear from the living than we have to apprehend from the dead, we ſhould be perfectly ſecure, and our lives would paſs away in a more ſerene and placid manner than the turbulent wills of our fellow-mortals will allow. Hark! I am ſure I hear the ſoft and diſtant ſound of a lute. I never yet knew a ghoſt that had a taſte for mortal harmony."

"I certainly hear muſic, (ſighed Madeline;) from what place can it proceed?—Surely it muſt be——"

"The amuſement, no doubt, of ſome one either on the ramparts or in the cells; for you have fluttered my ſpirits ſo much, I cannot

cannot determine from what part of the caſtle the ſound can reach us: let us, however, reſt ſatisfied, that no ghoſts would trouble themſelves to play a midnight ſerenade in order to terrify thoſe who could never have injured them. Let us wait till you are quite recovered before we mention a word of the occurrences of this night; for, were my father to hear of our alarm, we ſhould be inſtantly removed into other apartments, and ſhould not then be able to accompliſh our purpoſe of exploring the intricate receſſes of this caſtle. Good night, Madeline; I hope the muſician will not ceaſe his harmony till he has lulled us to repoſe."

She then jumped into her own bed; but her ſpirits were not altogether in that compoſed and courageous ſtate ſhe wiſhed her friend to imagine. She had heard ſtrange ſtories of lights being ſeen, of ghoſts gliding along the ramparts, of noiſes being heard; but, as ſhe had not been told of a ghoſtly muſician,

muſician, ſhe was inclined to hope it would, by ſome means or other, be explained to her ſatisfaction.

Till the riſing ſun, however, peeped over the hills which bounded the view from her windows, ſhe could not reſt; ſhe then ſunk into repoſe, and ſlept ſo ſoundly, that it was with difficulty her ſiſter, Edeliza, could convince her that the family waited breakfaſt till ſhe ſhould be in the humour to join them. Madeline took her's in bed. Roſeline hurried on her clothes, and Lady de Morney tenderly inquired if indiſpoſition had prevented her riſing at her uſual hour. Complaining of not having ſlept till late ſatisfied all parties, and, after a gentle reproof from Sir Philip, and a joke from Edwin for hugging her pillow ſo long, the ſubject was dropped.

The next day was fixed for Madeline to join the family at dinner, for the firſt time ſince her long and alarming illneſs. De Clavering,

Clavering, De Willows, and Hugh Camelford, were invited to be of the party on this joyous occaſion, and it was with the utmoſt difficulty that Edwin de Morney could conceal the rapture he felt in his boſom at the thought of ſeeing the fair nun once more among them. He had ventured, with the conſent of Roſeline, to make her ſeveral ſtolen viſits, and in thoſe moments of rapturous delight had diſcovered that Madeline de Glanville reigned ſole miſtreſs of his heart. Too young for the practice of deceit, too ſanguine and inexperienced to think of the conſequence of loving one devoted to the ſervice of her God, he flattered himſelf the partial indulgence of his mother would enable him to conquer any difficulties thrown in his way, either by his father, or the deſigns Madeline's parents had formed for her future deſtination. He likewiſe cheriſhed the ſweet hope that Madeline would not be averſe to accept him as a lover. His own heart had taught him

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to read the language of the eyes, and in her's he ſaw, or thought he ſaw, joy ſparkle at his approach, and a ſoft ſadneſs overcloud them at his departure.

The party met at dinner. Madeline entered the room, leaning on the ſupporting arm of Edwin, and followed by Roſeline. Never, in the full bloom of youth and health, had the fair invalid looked ſo inexpreſſibly lovely. A faint bluſh tinged her cheek upon receiving the congratulations of the company on her recovery. The doctor humouroufly declared he was entitled to their thanks for the reſurrection of their friend.

" A reſurrection, methinks, it is in reality, (ſaid de Willows ;) ' for the mortal ſeems to have put on immortality,' and to have brought down from heaven the beauty and form of an angel."

" Hey day ! (cried Sir Philip ;) why, good people, you all ſeem to be taking vaſt pains to make my ſweet nun believe a language

you

you yourſelves do not ſeem perfectly to underſtand. That we are all glad to ſee her reſtored to us I hope and truſt ſhe believes; but our congratulations muſt convince her, notwithſtanding your high-flown compliments, that ſhe is a mere mortal, like the reſt of her ſex."

"Not exactly like ſome of them, (ſaid the doctor;) for, if ſhe were, De Willows would not look at her as if he had a mind to ſeize the precious morſel from mother-church."

This ſally produced a hearty laugh from all but Edwin and Lady de Morney, who, ſeeing the converſation was become diſtreſſing to her young friend, ſummoned them to ſit down to dinner.

"In Cot's name, (cried Camelford,) let us obey orders, for I feel myſelf all mortal at ſight of Sir-loin, who is as coot and entertaining a knight as any on this ſide the Welch mountains."

"Excellent, faith! (exclaimed De Clavering;) and you look at him with as much pleaſure

pleaſure as a goat would at a field of young graſs, or as Edwin at his ſiſter Roſeline."

Edwin at this moment was gazing at Madeline with an earneſtneſs that ſtruck the doctor, and he took this method of withdrawing his attention from an object which he conſidered might prove dangerous to the peace of his young friend, to whom he was moſt ſincerely and affectionately attached.

The day was ſpent with all that ſerene harmony which attends the ſociety of friends. Madeline's return to the ſocial party was like that of one having been ſo long abſent, that little hope was entertained of ever meeting again. She retired to her room at an early hour, accompanied by Roſeline; and the progreſs of her recovery, though ſlow, was ſo viſible, as in a few days to remove all anxious fears from every heart but that of the impaſſioned Edwin, that no further danger was to be apprehended from the effects of the fever.

For

For more than a week the young ladies heard nothing to diſturb them. They were lodged at a great diſtance from the reſt of the family, and Roſeline, having informed her brother of Madeline's fears, he had requeſted his mother to let him ſleep in that wing of the caſtle, leſt Madeline ſhould be taken ill in the night, and his ſiſter under the neceſſity of leaving her to call aſſiſtance. His requeſt was granted, at the ſame time he received his mother's commendations and thanks for this prudent precaution.

CHAP. III

DURING the time that De Willows was cheriſhing an increaſing affection for Madeline, the youthful Edeliza, now in her ſixteenth year, was in a ſituation more diſtreſſing. She had long been accuſtomed to conſider De Willows in the light of a playfellow, and to be gratified by his almoſt undivided attention, while to him her's was wholly confined. With Camelford ſhe would ſometimes romp, if De Willows were abſent, but, as ſoon as he returned, ſhe would fly to him, and complain of the young lieutenant's

lieutenant's having wearied her by playing too roughly.

Love even with the inexperienced is generally quick-ſighted. Edeliza had obſerved, with a kind of trembling apprehenſion, and a fear ſhe knew not how to account for, the attentions De Willows paid to Madeline. She was angry,—ſhe was ſhocked,—thought her not half ſo handſome as ſhe once had been, and wondered what the gentlemen could ſee to admire in ſo ghoſtly a figure; her brother, De Clavering, Hugh Camelford, and Elwyn, might make as much fuſs as they pleaſed about the beautiful nun, as they choſe to call her, but that De Willows ſhould be ſo blind, ſo provoking, ſhe could not bear to recollect; however, as ſhe would ſoon be obliged to return to the nunnery, ſhe hoped De Willows would then forget ſhe had ever left it, and recover his ſenſes.

Thus was the little blind god, who has been the delight and the torment of all

all ages, beginning to play croſs purpoſes at the caſtle, and aiming his arrows at hearts too innocent to guard againſt or repel their attacks. De Willows had ever admired Edeliza as a beautiful and intereſting child; he had been in the habit of ſeeing her, from the time ſhe was ten years old, every day; therefore her progreſs towards womanhood had paſſed in a manner unperceived, and he had indulged himſelf and his little favourite in the ſame fond and playful endearments as had taken place from the firſt of their meeting, and that without forming an idea of there being either danger or impropriety in ſo doing. Had any one informed De Willows that Edeliza was cheriſhing a growing affection for him, which, if unreturned, would endanger her future peace, he would have treated it as the idle chimera of their own whimſical brain; but, had he once ſeriouſly ſuppoſed he was deſtroying her happineſs, and planting the thorn of anguiſh in her innocent boſom, his heart was ſo much the ſeat of true honour,

he

he would have ſtabbed in his own breaſt rather than have acted unjuſty by the daughter of his friend.

It happened about this period that Sir Philip de Morney was obliged to go to London in order to ſettle a law-ſuit which had been long depending, and which had haraſſed his mind very much. De Huntingfield was to take the command of the caſtle during his abſence, being the oldeſt officer in the place. De Willows, though of higher rank, was too young to be entruſted with a charge of ſo much importance, and gladly yielded the honour to one ſo much his ſuperior in years. Sir Philip departed with reluctance, took leave of his family with tenderneſs, and promiſed to return the firſt moment after the affair was ſettled.—Lady de Morney was reconciled to the temporary abſence of her huſband by the important buſineſs which had called him away.

The young friends, having ſlept for ſeveral nights undiſturbed, had almoſt loſt all remembrance of their fears before the departure of Sir Philip, whoſe abſence happened very opportunely to gratify their curioſity in viſiting every part of the caſtle, Edwin having promiſed to procure the keys, and accompany them.

Two nights after Sir Philip's departure, having ſpent a cheerful evening, they retired to reſt in unuſual good ſpirits, but were awakened about midnight by a war of the elements, and what made the ſcene more terrific, though it was in the depth of winter, the thunder rolled in tremendous peals over their heads, the ſturdy walls of the caſtle appeared to ſhake from their centre to the battlements, and the lightning flaſhed upon the walls, and gleamed along the vaulted paſſages, as if to make horror viſible. The young ladies dreſſed themſelves, and Edwin tapped at the door with a light, inviting them to go down into one of the

lower

lower rooms, to which he would accompany them.

Cheered and revived by the ſound of his voice, they readily agreed to his propoſal, and in a few minutes opened the door to admit their conductor. They made as little noiſe as poſſible, fearful of diſturbing Lady de Morney, if ſhe was not already alarmed by the tempeſt; and, to prevent the poſſibility of doing ſo, they agreed to go down a winding ſtaircaſe that led through one of the towers, and which was ſeldom uſed by the family. They crept ſlowly along, when, in one part of it, which was rather wider than the reſt, they paſſed four ſteps, which led to a door in the wall, and which appeared ſo well ſecured by locks and bars, as if it never was intended to be opened.

"For heaven's ſake, (whiſpered Roſeline,) to what room does that door lead? I never ſaw it before."

"I entreat you (ſaid the trembling Madeline) not to ſtop in this horrid place to aſk queſtions, (for the humid and unwholſome dews of night and noxious vapours hung on the walls.) Though I am not afraid now Edwin is with us, yet I may take cold by ſtaying here."

Edwin preſſed the hand which was reſting on his arm to his throbbing boſom, and hurried them into the room the family had left, and they were all truly rejoiced to find an excellent fire ſtill blazing on the wide-extended hearth, round which they ſeated themſelves, and neither Madeline nor Edwin uttered a ſingle complaint at having been ſo unſeaſonably diſturbed.

The tempeſt having ſpent its fury, ſubſided by degrees into a calm, and the party, entering into converſation, almoſt forgot it had ever been. Roſeline however repeated her queſtion reſpecting the door they had ſeen in their way down the ſtaircaſe. Edwin

aſſured her he knew no more than her ſelf to what place it belonged: he had heard that the reſtleſs ghoſt of ſome one had been bound in the apartments to which it led, and that orders had been given for it never to be opened. He had once made ſome inquiries of his father, but was deſired by him never to aſk any queſtions till he came to years of maturity, nor to explore any of the ſecret paſſages or entrances to the caſtle.

"Then, ſurely, (ſaid Madeline,) it would be extremely wrong to diſobey the commands of Sir Philip, merely to ſatisfy an idle and perhaps blamable curioſity."

"At the moment (interrupted Edwin) that I admire the complying ſweetneſs of the gentle Madeline, I muſt beg pardon for retaining my own reſolution of ſeeing thoſe parts of the caſtle from which I have been ſo long ſecluded. I am now arrived at an age that ſurely deſerves to be truſted, or I muſt be unfit to live in a ſituation like this. My father's reaſons for the ſecreſy he

has obſerved ſo long, I am unacquainted with; but I will moſt aſſuredly avail myſelf of his abſence to gratify my curioſity. I know where the keys are depoſited, and in a night or two will begin my nocturnal ſearch. If you and Roſeline are in the humour to accompany me, it is well; if not, I ſhall certainly go by myſelf."

"As that might be dangerous, (ſaid Roſeline, who rejoiced to find him ſo reſolute;) you muſt promiſe to take me along with you."

To this he aſſented, and Madeline agreed, with ſome little confuſion, to be of the party, concluding, Sir Philip muſt be wrong in not granting his ſon's requeſt. This matter ſettled, they retired for the reſt of the night, to forget, in the arms of ſleep, not only the caſtle and the nunnery, but the whole world.

The next night they were ſurpriſed by an unuſual noiſe, that ſeemed to be immediately

diately under them. It appeared ſomething like the rattling of a carriage over ſtones. Groans too they thought they heard; and, after dreſſing themſelves, Roſeline called her brother, to convince him their alarms were not the effects of imagination. He heard the ſame ſounds, and, in looking round their apartment, and into an adjoining cloſet, he diſcovered a trap-door, that was very curiouſly concealed under a board, which ſlided over it. He attempted to lift it up, but found it was ſecured by a lock which was hid in a ſmall projection of the wall.

Finding it impoſſible to obtain a paſſage, they determined to defer their ſearch till the ſucceeding night, when Edwin promiſed to ſecure the keys. He ſtayed with them till daylight diſſipated their fears; they then retired to repoſe; but ſleep deſerted their pillows. A thouſand vague conjectures occupied their minds, and Madeline, for the firſt time in her life, wiſhed herſelf abſent

from the caſtle: that there was ſomething to diſcover appeared beyond a doubt; but, whether the diſcovery would ſerve to relieve or increaſe their anxiety, was as hazardous as it was uncertain; however, as Roſeline and Edwin were reſolute to make the attempt, ſhe determined not to oppoſe them.

Edwin revolved in his mind how he might be able to find ſome clue to guide him, and reſolved to apply to an old ſoldier, whoſe whole life had been ſpent in the caſtle, to give him ſome account reſpecting it. He was fond of retracing paſt ſcenes, and, when once he began talking, knew not when to ſtop. From him Edwin learned all he wanted to be informed; by him he was told the uſe of the keys, and received every neceſſary direction. The old man, conſidering himſelf honoured by holding converſe with the governor's ſon, told him every circumſtance he knew or could recollect. The next day was ſpent in the ſame manner as uſual.

uſual. De Clavering was uncommonly facetious, De Willows particularly cheerful, Hugh Camelford entertaining, and De Huntingfield buſy in the active duties of his important office.

The afternoon being remarkably clear, mild, and ſerene, the whole party agreed to aſcend to the top of the caſtle, and walk on the ramparts, for the benefit of air and exerciſe. Edeliza would not quit the arm of De Willows, therefore Madeline was left uninterrupted to the care of Edwin.

The air was reviving, the proſpect picturesque and intereſting; for, notwithſtanding the ſeaſon, nature had ſtill beauties to catch the inquiring eye, and awaken the gratitude of innocent and cheerful hearts. A few evergreens, ſcattered here and there among the leafleſs trees, afforded ſhelter to innumerable birds. The red breaſt warbled his artleſs ſong, ſurrounded by a number of chirping ſparrows, who ſeemed gaily to flutter

around, making a moſt uncommon buſtle, which was occaſioned by a ſhower that had lately fallen.

"Confound theſe impertinent noiſy little devils! (ſaid De Clavering,) I wiſh I had my gun, and I would moſt aſſuredly put an end to ſome of this clatter."

"For ſhame, toctor, (cried Camelford;) what! would you teſtroy ſuch pretty harmleſs creatures as theſe? Rather ſave your ammunition for the enemies of your king,—that would be coot ſport indeed!—then, my man of mettle, we ſhould be petter employed; but let the ſparrow-family lif, and enjoy their prating."

"I believe you are nearly allied to that ſame family, (replied the doctor,) and therefore I do not wonder at your being anxious to preſerve your relations."

"Petter not provoke me, toctor. I am in a valiant humour juſt now, and, as Cot ſhall pleſs me, I will not pocket an affront from any one."

"Pack

"Pack it up in your knapſack, (replied the doctor drily,) and ſay, as our Saviour did, when tempted, "Get thee behind me, Satan!"—for really, Hugh, I often think the devil has jumped into your ſkull, and, by kicking about your brains, has made you ſo hot headed."

"Then the beſt thing I can do (replied Camelford) would be to put myſelf under your tirection to lay this ſame tevil, and by the time you had trained me of all my Welch ploot, he would leave my lifeleſs carcaſe to be poiled for your improvement; but avaunt, thou cataplaſm of cataplaſms!—I defy thy incantations, pliſters, and pleedings."

"I believe the young dog will live the longer, (cried the doctor, addreſſing De Willows,) but who among us will deny or defy the ſweet influence of theſe lilies and roſes that are now blooming around us."

"I do not pretend to any ſuch philoſophic apathy," replied De Willows.

"If you did, your looks would betray you, (retorted Edwin.) To deny the united influence of love and beauty is not the province of a ſoldier."

"Do all ſoldiers admire beauty, and fall in love?" inquired the artleſs Edeliza, looking earneſtly at De Willows.

"I believe ſo, my ſweet little girl, (he anſwered;) love and death are alike inevitable."

"But not equally dangerous, (ſaid the laughing Roſeline;) for I never heard of any one dying of the wounds given by the little blind god, though thouſands fall victims to the more certain arrows ſent from the furnace of war."

"By the crate Cot, (ſaid Camelford,) I had rather tie by the wounds of a pair of pright eyes than by thoſe of a cannon, loaded by the hands of an ugly tog, who like a putcher delights in ploot."

"More fool you, (replied De Clavering;) the death in the one caſe would be glorious and

and inſtantaneous,—in the other, fooliſh and lingering,——"

"Unleſs I applied to a doctor to put me out of my miſery, and then I ſhould get rid of it in a trice."

"A truce with your compliments, good folks, (ſaid Roſeline;) ſuppoſe we endeavour to reconcile ourſelves to the world, and all its ſtrange vagaries, by a dance in the great hall. This propoſal met with general approbation; to the great hall they deſcended, and, ſurrounded by the ruſty armour of their hardy forefathers, they enjoyed in the mazy windings of the lively dance, a pleaſure as innocent as it was amuſing, Lady de Morney herſelf being a gratified ſpectator of the ſcene.

This hall was decorated, if we may uſe the term, with a vaſt number of ſuits of armour, belonging to the family of Norfolk One, more light and higher finiſhed than the reſt, appeared to have belonged to a youth of Edwin's ſize. He was prevailed on

on to fit it; and, armed cap-à-pié, ſtrutted about in bold defiance, and threw down his gauntlet, daring any one to ſingle combat who ſhould deny the palm of beauty being due to the lady he ſhould name.

"Suppoſe I throw down my glove," ſaid de Willows."

"You would ſoon take it up again, (replied Edwin, ſomewhat ſcornfully,) as I fancy our taſte in beauty to be the ſame."

De Willows coloured, — Madeline appeared uneaſy,— and Edeliza declared armour was the moſt frightful dreſs ſhe ever ſaw, while the younger part of the family jumped round their brother, and with eagerneſs made many inquiries concerning the uſe of every part of his dreſs, and requeſted their mother to let them wear ſome of the nodding plumes which hung in lofty ſtate around them.

In the courſe of the evening, Edwin gave Madeline a hint to retire early to her chamber,

chamber, having obtained poſſeſſion of the keys, and gained ſuch directions as could not fail to ſatisfy their curioſity and guide them in their reſearches. Madeline ſilently acquieſced, and imparted, with trembling impatience, the tidings to her friend. She was thoughtful and abſent the reſt of the evening, and availed herſelf of the earlieſt opportunity of withdrawing to her chamber. Roſeline very ſoon followed her, and, as ſoon as the family had retired to reſt, Edwin ſtole gently to their apartment. They had anxiouſly expected his arrival, and therefore gave him immediate admittance.

Roſeline rejoiced at ſeeing her brother, and eagerly inquired if he was ſure that he had the keys that would enable them to proceed. He then produced a moſt enormous bunch, with a dark lantern, which was to guide them through the intricate labyrinths of the caſtle, and adviſed Madeline and his ſiſter to guard againſt the damps of the paſſages they had to go through, and

to

to arm themſelves with their whole ſtock of reſolution, leſt their terrors ſhould betray him.

Roſeline aſſured him her fears were conquered by her ſtrong deſire to explore the ſecrets of their habitation, and Madeline promiſed not to let her apprehenſions impede their progreſs. Edwin lighted his candle, and with ſome difficulty unfaſtened the trap-door he had diſcovered in their cloſet; but, on opening it, a kind of noxious vapour aſcended, that almoſt tempted them to give up their deſign. A flight of broken brick ſteps, of amazing depth, carried them into a narrow winding paſſage, in which it was impoſſible for more than one perſon to move forward at once.

Madeline caught hold of Edwin's coat, and Roſeline followed her with a lighted candle in her hand. For ſome time they groped along, frequently ſtumbling over the ſtones which had fallen from the mouldering walls,

walls, and trembling left this paſſage ſhould lead them into danger. Edwin frequently ſtopped to encourage them to go on, aſſuring them they had nothing to apprehend. By degrees the path widened, and, on ſuddenly turning, they entered a kind of ſquare, round which were ſeveral doors, but ſo low, they did not ſeem made to admit men but dwarfs. Going up to one of them, Edwin puſhed it open with his foot, and he was convinced they were the dungeons in which priſoners of war were confined. Some contained only bedſteads, iron rings, and fetters; in one of them they ſaw a human ſkull; in another was a coffin, which appeared to have ſtood there for ages, and with its ſilent inhabitant was falling to decay.

They proceeded till they came to a door which was ſo thickly ſtudded over with nails, bolts, bars, and locks, that it impeded their farther progreſs. Edwin would fain have attempted to open it, but was prevented by his ſhivering and terrified companions.

"Brother,

"Brother, (cried Roſeline,) we have ſeen quite enough to ſatisfy us for one night."

"Another time, Edwin, (added Madeline,) I ſhall feel leſs repugnance to proceed. But how do you know that door does not lead to ſome apartment where the reſtleſs ſpirit of another diſcontented ghoſt may be confined, by ſome potent ſpell, till releaſed by the intruſion of beings who now wander amid the gloomy ſcenes of life as he once did?"

"No ſuch thing, (replied the intrepid and reſolute Edwin;) that door is an entrance to a ſubterraneous paſſage, which leads from this caſtle to Mettingham, merely to give entrance to troops in any caſe of emergency, or to cover the retreat of others that may want to eſcape."

"But, as it has not been uſed, either for the one purpoſe or the other, ſince my father reſided here, (ſaid Roſeline,) it may now be a ſhelter for thieves and traitors; therefore, for heaven's ſake, let us now return to our apartment."

Edwin,

Edwin, whoſe diſpoſition was as amiable as his manners and perſon were captivating, no longer contended with their wiſhes, but led the way for them as he had done before, and, as he was a fine tall youth, was obliged to ſtoop as he went along.

Juſt as they came near the foot of the ſteps which led to their apartment, they ſaw, or thought they ſaw, a faint light gleam acroſs a paſſage which led to another part of theſe gloomy habitations, and they imagined they perceived the figure of ſome one diſappear at their approach. This alarmed the whole group, and they hurried up the ſtairs as haſtily as their fears would let them. Having cautiouſly faſtened the trap-door, they ſat down to recover themſelves, and recollected with a degree of horror and diſguſt the gloomy ſcenes they had viſited; but the light, and the figure they had all caught a tranſient view of, dwelt moſt forcibly on their minds. Madeline declared ſhe ſhould never have ſufficient reſolution to

re-viſit

re-viſit theſe abodes of terror, contrived by the ſtern hands of deſpotiſm and ambition.

"When we think, as we ſurely may, (ſaid ſhe,) with ſome degree of certainty, how many poor ſouls have languiſhed out a life of miſery in theſe gloomy cells, can we wonder if they are haunted by all they have entombed? Shut out not only from the world, but from every comfort, nature too recoils and ſhudders at the cruelties that may have been practiſed on the poor victims thus buried in the bowels of the earth."

"All this may be very true, my ſweet Madeline, (interrupted Edwin,) but I am determined to re-viſit them. Perhaps ſome poor ſufferers may ſtill remain in the caſtle; if ſo, it would be delightful to ſoften the rigours of their fate."

"True, my dear brother, (cried Roſeline, her eyes illumined with the ſoft beams of genuine benevolence and philanthropy,) I will certainly attend you."

"To

"To quiet the fears of our lovely friend, (ſaid Edwin,) I will requeſt old Bertrand, who has lived in this caſtle from the time we came into it, to accompany and direct us in our ſearch after miſery. I am told too, (he added,) there is a paſſage which leads from this caſtle into the chapel of your nunnery. If I can find it out, I ſhall certainly pay you a viſit, and ſteal you from your cell; for, my dear Madeline, whatever may be the truth and the virtues of our holy religion, it is doubtleſs one of its abuſes to ſhut from the world thoſe lovely works of the creation beſt calculated to enliven and adorn it. Can it be deemed a greater crime to doom a worthleſs, or, ſuppoſe I ſay, an innocent, man, to languiſh in a dungeon, than it is to compel an unfortunate female to waſte her days in the auſtere walls of a nunnery, —kneel to the unfeeling image of a ſaint,— watch the midnight lamp,—ſeclude herſelf from all ſocial enjoyments,— and linger through life in ſolitary ſadneſs, without a friend,

a friend, or a lover, to cheer her on her way?"

"Huſh, for heaven's ſake! (ſaid the frightened Madeline;) if Father Anſelm heard you talk thus lightly and profanely of our holy religion, I ſhould be for ever debarred ſeeing you and Roſeline again, for life ſhut out from the world, and compelled to take the veil."

"Never, by heaven! (cried Edwin, thrown entirely off his guard by the tender confuſion and agitation of Madeline:) you ſhall take no vows but ſuch as love and nature dictate. I would periſh a thouſand times,—loſe a thouſand lives to preſerve you from a fate that would not only make you wretched, but me for ever miſerable.—Roſeline has long known that you are dear to my heart. Say,—eaſe me of the torturing ſuſpenſe I this moment feel,— do you not find an advocate in your boſom that will plead my cauſe?"

Madeline trembled violently; her eyes were bent to the ground: ſhe would have fallen,

fallen, had not Roſeline flown to ſupport her. She attempted to ſpeak, but the words died away inarticulately.

"I ſee how it is, (cried Edwin impaſſionately;) the happy De Willows has gained by his attentions what I have loſt by diſguſting you with mine: you hate, you deſpiſe me. I will ſolicit my father to let me join the army: I will for ever remove this deteſted object from your ſight, and pray that the portion of happineſs I have loſt may be redoubled to you."

Madeline, alarmed by the energy of this ſpeech, was inſtantly rouſed from the languor into which ſhe had ſunk.

"I hate no one, (ſaid ſhe ſoftly;) but Edwin, you forget it would be a crime in me to love. If, indeed, that had not been the caſe,—if I were at liberty——"

"You would bleſs the happy De Willows with your hand."

"Never!—De Willows I regard as a friend: as any thing more I never did,—never

never could think of him. I am you know baniſhed from all intercourſe with the world; —my ſentence has been long pronounced; from that ſentence there can be no appeal. Would to heaven I had ſubmitted to it, and never quitted the retreat to which parental authority conſigned me! At this painful moment my own feelings inflict my puniſhment."

"Then you do not hate me? (cried Edwin, taking her hand.)—Only ſay I am not quite indifferent to you, and I will endeavour to reſt ſatisfied, and aſk no more; truſting that time may do much in my favour; but, if you attempt to deprive me of all hope,—if you deny me this innocent gratification, I will go to the wars."

"Ah! why will you preſs me to diſcover what it would be better to conceal?—why will you tempt me to ſwerve from my duty to my God and my parents, and make me a perjured, an unworthy ſacrifice?—You have, I fear, taught my heart a leſſon

it

it ought never to have learned: but it muſt be the hard taſk of my future life to atone for the crime I have committed in having ſuffered a mortal to rival that God, who alone ſhould have occupied all my thoughts and wiſhes."

Edwin threw himſelf at the feet of Madeline. His raptures were now as unbounded as the conflict had been ſevere; and not till ſhe ſunk fainting into the arms of her friend, could he be perſuaded to quit their apartment.

Happy was it for the party that Roſeline had not only a greater ſhare of prudence and underſtanding than moſt of her ſex, but likewiſe more fortitude than is uſually their portion. She ſoon recovered, her friend ſoothed her into ſome degree of compoſure, and endeavoured to inſpire her with hopes that ſome plan might be adopted which would remove thoſe difficulties that threatened to divide two hearts love had united, and which appeared formed by nature to

make each other happy. Roſeline well knew her father would not only be diſpleaſed, but ſhocked, if he diſcovered this unfortunate attachment, and ſhe blamed herſelf for having been the innocent cauſe of involving two people ſo dear to her in ſuch a hopeleſs ſcene of complicated diſtreſs.

Notwithſtanding the agonizing conflicts which had attended the éclairciſſement, the lovers felt a heavy burthen removed from their hearts. Convinced of being mutually beloved, all other ſorrows, all other trials appeared light and trivial: they ſunk into a more ſweet and peaceful ſlumber than they had long enjoyed,—dreamed of each other, and aroſe the next morning with renovated ſpirits and revived hopes.

Madeline wiſhed the hour was arrived they were to renew their midnight ramble, and thought, if ſhe ſhould meet a thouſand ghoſts, ſhe ſhould not fear them, while Edwin, who loved her ſo tenderly and ſincerely,

was

was near to guard her. She was eager too, but ſcarcely durſt acknowledge to herſelf ſhe *wiſhed* the paſſage might be found which led to the chapel in her nunnery.

CHAP. IV.

IF there be any ſo faſtidious and unfeeling as to condemn and deprecate the romantic hopes and flattering viſions cheriſhed in the buoyant boſom of nineteen, I am ſorry for them, and here avow, I wiſh never entirely to forget the faſcinating pleaſure of ſuch air-built hopes. Should they be ſometimes attended with danger to the weak and frail, they are likewiſe accompanied with their advantages to the good and virtuous, and often enable us to encounter trials with a reſolution and fortitude, which, at a more advanced

advanced period of our lives, when time has weakened our bodily frame, and experience deprived us of thoſe gay illuſions, we find it difficult and painful to acquire.—The philoſophy of nineteen, though not abſtruſe, is flattering and concluſive; ſo much the more valuable; for, after all the reſearches of philoſophy, what are we taught to know, but that man is born to trouble as the ſparks fly upwards?—that we are merely the pilgrims and paſſengers of a day,—that our reſting place muſt be found in a better, an unknown world,—that we muſt encounter innumerable trials on our journey, and at laſt die and be forgotten, even by thoſe for whom we have toiled, and to whom we are moſt tenderly attached?—Surely then we may be allowed to ſnatch, or ſteal, a few of thoſe innocent enjoyments juſt thrown in our way, to encourage our fortitude, and clear our path from ſome of the briars and thorns with which it is ſo profuſely planted.

Happy is it for thoſe in the common walks of life, that all their ſtock of philoſophy is compriſed in few words, acquired without ſtudy, and retained without taxing their time or burthening their memory,—"it was my fate,—I could not run from it,—it was to be." Theſe trite ſentences reconcile them to many diſtreſſing events, and ſometimes are their excuſe for the frailties of their conduct.

When the parties met at breakfaſt the next morning, any careful obſerver might have diſcovered, by the confuſion viſible on the countenance of Madeline,—the conſtraint in her manner of addreſſing Edwin,—his more than uſual vivacity, and the pale cheeks and ſwelled eyes of Roſeline, that ſomething had occurred to produce the change; but, ſuſpicion not being a frequent gueſt at the caſtle, no ſuch diſcovery was made: every one employed themſelves as uſual, and in a few hours univerſal cheerfulneſs ſeemed to prevail.

The

The only obſervations made by Lady de Morney were, that her dear Edwin looked remarkably well, was in charming ſpirits, and had dreſſed himſelf better and more becomingly than uſual. Madeline coloured, and thought the ſame. Roſeline ſmiled, and Edwin whiſpered ſomething in the ear of Madeline that prevented the roſes fading on her cheek.

The dreſs of Madeline, though to her particularly becoming, would to thouſands have been totally the reverſe. It was the dreſs of the order of Benedictines, to which ſhe belonged, conſiſting of a black robe, with a ſcapulary of the ſame. Under the robe, nuns, when profeſſed, wore a tunic of white undyed wool, and, when they went to the choir, they had a cowl like that worn by the monks; but the boarders, who were in what we may call a ſtate of probation, were allowed to wear a tunic of muſlin or cambrick, and covered their heads with a white veil. This dreſs, little ſuited to pleaſe

the whimſical taſte of the preſent time, was, ſtrange as it may appear, ſimple and becoming, and proved the truth of the poet's obſervation, that

——— Lovelineſs
Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the moſt.

Madeline, in the habit of her order, was ſo captivating a figure, that no one ever thought any alteration or change in it could have added a charm to thoſe beſtowed on her by the partial hand of nature. She was tall, and elegantly formed; the expreſſion of her countenance, blended with ſoftneſs and dignity, conveying an idea of ſuperior virtue being united to ſuperior lovelineſs.

Juſt before dinner, the Doctor obſerved that Madeline looked pale: having felt her pulſe, he inquired what had given them cauſe to beat ſo much out of time.

"I muſt examine into this matter, (ſaid he archly.) They are galloping along at a ſtrange

ſtrange rate ; either the head or the heart muſt occaſion this revolution in the ſyſtem of my patient's uſual habit. If it be the diſeaſe of the heart, I muſt reſign my place to a more able practitioner.—Do not bluſh, my fair nun, but tell me whom you would have called in."

"I am perfectly ſatisfied with your advice, my good doctor, and at this time believe I want a cook more than a phyſician, therefore excuſe me if I ſay you entirely miſunderſtand my caſe."

"Don't be too poſitive (ſaid De Clavering) of my ignorance. You may ſafely truſt me with all your complaints,—even with thoſe of the heart ; for I feel myſelf extremely intereſted that you ſhould not return to the nunnery with any additional one added to thoſe you ſo unfortunately brought away."

"Ah ! (ſaid Madeline,) mentally, advice is now too late. I ſhall carry back with me a more corroding, a more painful complaint

than any I ever knew before; yet, ſtrange as it is, I would not be cured for the world, as my being ſo would wound Edwin de Morney.

Only Camelford was preſent when this little badinage paſſed between the Doctor and his patient. He adviſed the former to lay aſide his wig, and take up the cowl, as the moſt certain method of diſcovering the truth; "for, though the laties, (he added,) will not tell all they think to you or I, they will not attempt to teceive their Cot."

"If I thought putting on a cowl would transform me to a god, (ſaid De Clavering,) I would ſoon hazard the transformation, and then I would place a ſhield before the heart of every fair daughter of Britain, that ſhould have the property of a taliſman, to warn them againſt the deſigns and inſidious attentions of young men, ſix feet high, with black ſparkling eyes, auburn hair, teeth of ivory, handſome legs, and white hands."

Madeline

Madeline knew the portrait, and, riſing to conceal her bluſhes, ran haſtily out of the room.

Hugh Camelford burſt into a violent fit of laughter, and told the Doctor, "ſo far from being thought a Cot, the young laty certainly took him for the tifel, having diſcovered his ſpells and clofen foot, or perhaps for Tafy ap Jones, who, after tying for lof, was thrown into the Red Sea, and had haunted all lof-ſick maidens ever ſince, poor diſcontented tifel!"

"And that will be your fate, Hugh, (retorted the Doctor,) unleſs you ſend home the Welch laſs whom you betrayed, and then left to ſtarve with your ſon, a fat chubby boy, very like his father."

"As I hope to eſcape the toctor and tamnation, (ſaid the indignant Hugh,) I never petrayed a laſs in my whole life; therefore, you cataplaſm, you pliſter, you cauſtic of fire, pring no ſuch ſcandals on the coot name of Camelford, leſt I take a

little of your carnivorous blood, and make you drink it!"

The Doctor ſtole off laughing, and Camelford ſoon recovered his good humour.

A dance was propoſed for the evening, and readily agreed to by the young people, who determined to make the time paſs as cheerfully as poſſible during the abſence of Sir Philip and the viſit of Madeline.

In thoſe days dancing was the favourite amuſement of the youth of both ſexes: rich and poor, young and old, one with another, mixed in the animating dance:—complaints of wearineſs and fatigue were ſeldom heard. This exerciſe was not only favourable to health, but the roſes it produced on the glowing cheek of youth rendered all application to the borrowed ones of art totally unneceſſary. Rouge was then unknown, and no *Warren* exiſted to aboliſh old women, by giving the furrowed features

of age an unfading bloom. The plain jacket, with a ſmall quantity of ribbon bound round a cambric cap, were then thought becoming, and few ornaments were worn but on very important and particular occaſions; yet beauty was equally admired: the ſame homage was paid to it, and it held in bondage as many captives, without the adventitious aid of deception and extravagance.

Another preſervative of youth and health was their keeping better, that is, earlier hours. Night was night, and dedicated to its original purpoſe. Day was properly divided, and found of ſufficient length for all the uſeful employments of life. Few young ladies but had ſeen the ſun riſe in all its glory, and found their hearts expanded by the grand and awful ſight; and, while they welcomed its reviving rays from the portals of the Eaſt, it tended to raiſe their minds to that God who made the ſun, and

who

who alone could number the ſtars by which it was ſurrounded.

A fine moon-light evening ſeldom paſſed unnoticed by theſe aſpiring worthies, eager after knowledge; for, having happily fewer amuſements, they had more time to attend to the inſtructive beauties of nature, the ſtudy of which affords an inexhauſtible ſource of pleaſure and ſurpriſe. Fearleſs of their complexions, they not only rambled but worked in their gardens. Each had a little ſpot of ground marked out, and it ſoon produced the deſired effect; every one was emulous to outſhine the other in its cultivation, and Sir Philip or Lady de Morney were often called upon as arbitrators to decide the ſuperior beauty of a roſe, the ſize of a carnation, or the ſnowy tints of a lily.

De Clavering had told them, that, under their feet, they often trampled on plants, in the careful ſtudy of which might be found a cure

a cure for every diſeaſe incident to the climate they inhabited, and that in other climates the earth produced her treaſures for the ſame benevolent purpoſe; but the careleſs inattention of mankind to this uſeful knowledge had rendered the profeſſion of phyſic abſolutely neceſſary, and given men of learning and genius an opportunity of diſplaying their talents in preſerving the lives of their fellow creatures.

In conſequence of theſe hints, all kinds of herbs were planted, and their virtues put to the teſt by being applied to relieve the diſeaſes of their poor neighbours; and never did a high-bred town belle, at making a conqueſt, or a hero, after obtaining a ſignal victory, exult more, or feel greater delight than the having effected a cure produced in the minds of theſe young practitioners. De Clavering was gratified in giving them all the intelligence they requeſted, very often inquired when they went their rounds to viſit

their

their patients, and offered them his phyſical wig to give them conſequence.

In thoſe days people lived much longer in the ſame number of years; to riſe between five and ſix o'clock, and breakfaſt at ſeven, was their uſual cuſtom, the time of taking their meals differing as much as their antique habits. Dinner was conſtantly on the table between eleven and twelve, and ſupper regularly ſerved at ſeven; tea was then but little uſed. Whether the introduction of that bewitching beverage has been followed by the long catalogue of evils laid to its charge, I am not able to determine; but, as I have known many weak conſtitutions who have never felt any ill effects from taking it, I am inclined to think it has not ſuch dangerous properties as are alledged againſt it by valetudinarians and their medical adviſers.

But what would the antediluvian ſouls, who compoſe my dramatis perſonæ, ſay to the

the innovations made upon time in theſe days of delicate and faſhionable refinement? They would ſuppoſe the world turned topſy-turvy, and be puzzled to know why the afternoon ſhould be diſcarded, and what part of the twenty-four hours to call night.

The periodical times of taking refreſhment are quite different to what they formerly were, and contradictory to the practice of our anceſtors, who hoarded their time, and conſidered it as a treaſure of ſome value. We may now literally be ſaid to turn day into night, and night into day, while the want of time is the ſource of general complaint. Our people of faſhion, and many of no faſhion at all, breakfaſt at three in the afternoon, dine at ſeven, ſip their tea at eleven o'clock at night, and ſup at four in the morning; whereas Queen Elizabeth breakfaſted at five or ſix in the morning, and dined at eleven in the forenoon.—She and all her court went to bed with the

ſun

ſun in ſummer, and at eight or nine o'clock in winter.

The parliament, in the reign of Charles the Firſt, went to prayers at five or ſix in the morning, and the king dined at twelve; nay, in the licentious reign of that merry monarch, his ſon, dinner at two was thought a very late hour; for all public diverſions were at an end by ſix in the evening, and the ladies, after ſeeing a play, went in their carriages to Hyde-Park.

Whether it would not be greatly to the advantage of people in general to revive ſome old cuſtoms, and return to the prudent habits of our progenitors, will not admit of much diſpute. Private families, in theſe expenſive times, would undoubtedly be benefited. Morning would again become a theme for the poet, and poor day-light be brought into faſhion. Our parliament too would find more time to tranſact the important buſineſs of the nation, on which they

ſo

ſo eloquently harangue. Poſſibly a good dinner would add weight to their arguments, and the not being hungry would prevent their eagerneſs to adjourn.

But one of its greateſt evils, after that above mentioned, is felt by ſervants, particularly the unhappy cook. She ſeldom ſees the face of day,—never enjoys the enlivening rays of the ſun, and can ſcarcely find time even to change her clothes till the night is too far advanced to render the change neceſſary. It was formerly the cuſtom for people to walk after tea, and by doing ſo acquire a redoubled reliſh for the variegated beauties of nature; but now the table makes its appearance at ſo unſeaſonable an hour, and faſhionable etiquette, with the love of good cheer, detains them ſo long, that in fact it appears the chief buſineſs of life to ſtudy every art and contrivance how to deſtroy and ſquander, not how to improve our time; and, inſtead of people's eating

eating that they may live, they now live only to eat and drink, that the ſenſes, I preſume, may be diſabled from torturing them with reproaches.—But to return to our tale.

In the evening, as Edeliza was going down the dance, her eyes, with thoſe of Madeline, were attracted by the ſame object,—a plume of white feathers, placed on a ſuit of armour, nodded, and the armour moved. This had ſuch an effect, Madeline ſcreamed, and Edeliza, throwing herſelf into the arms of De Willows, begged he would protect her from the ghoſt. The dancing ſtopped, the whole party was alarmed, and Lady de Morney very much ſurpriſed; but, on being informed what had occaſioned this buſtle, Hugh Camelford flew to diſcover its cauſe, and, jumping upon a long table, which was placed by the ſide of the room for the accommodation of large parties on any particular occaſion, he without much ceremony caught hold of the haunted armour,

mour, when, to the aſtoniſhment of the whole company there inſtantly appeared,—gentle reader, be not alarmed!— not the ghoſt of a murdered hero, nor forſaken maid, —but the youngeſt daughter of Sir Philip de Morney, who, ſkipping from her concealment upon the table, and from thence to the floor, ſhook her head, decorated with a profuſion of flaxen hair, which curled in natural ringlets, and laughed heartily at the fright ſhe had occaſioned.

"Of all the choſts I ever ſaw, (ſaid the delighted Hugh, catching her up in his arms,) this is by much the prettieſt and moſt entertaining. I ſhould like to be haunted by ſuch an one all the tays of my life."

Lady de Morney called the little culprit, and, having ſeverely reproved her, ordered her to bed, to which ſhe had been ſent before the party had began dancing, for ſome fault ſhe had committed, but had perſuaded one

one of the ſervants to place her as before deſcribed, that ſhe might be a ſpectator, though ſhe was not permitted to be a partaker in the amuſement. Lady de Morney reprimanded the ſervant; and, had it not been for the general interceſſions of the company, poor Birtha would have been a priſoner in her own apartment ſome days.

This incident, ſimple in itſelf, happened very unfortunately for the two ladies, who had agreed to accompany Edwin in his ſubterranean tour. They lingered till the laſt moment, and then withdrew with viſible reluctance; but determined, as ſoon as they reached their own room, not to ſay a word to Edwin of their fears, as they knew it would expoſe them to ridicule, if not to cenſure, and there was not in the catalogue of human ills or evils any circumſtance Madeline would ſo much have dreaded as being thought meanly of by Edwin de Morney.

Within

Within little more than an hour after the family had withdrawn, and all the ſervants retired to reſt, they were joined by the ſanguine and ſpirited Edwin, accompanied by the ancient veteran, who, though loaded with the heavy burthen of fourſcore years, was ſtill active and hearty, his ſenſes unimpaired, and his ſturdy limbs ſtill able to carry with firmneſs their accuſtomed load. His grey locks hung with ſilvered dignity upon his aged ſhoulders, and his eyes retained ſome of their former expreſſion. He made a profound obeiſance to the ladies on his entrance, and was received with that condeſcending affability which his years and long-tried faithfulneſs demanded.

Edwin's manner of introducing him, flattered the old man's remaining ſtock of vanity, and revived, in full force, the remembrance of his former exploits, which, though they had not procured him preferment, ſecured him attention and reſpect.

"This

"This is my friend Bertrand, (ſaid Edwin, addreſſing Madeline particularly on his entrance;) though you had ſome fears with only ſuch a ſtripling as myſelf for a leader, you can have none with ſo experienced and brave a guide."

The old man liſtened with delighted attention to this eulogium from the lips of his dear young maſter, whom he had ſo often dandled on his knee, whom he had been ſo fortunate as to ſnatch from a watery grave, and for whom he retained a ſtronger affection than for any other being on earth. Sir Philip had long maintained him in eaſe and comfort, and excuſed him from every employment, but ſuch as tended to the preſervation of his health. Both ladies held out their hands, which he reſpectfully kiſſed, and prayed that heaven might bleſs and reward them for their kindneſs to their old but grateful ſervant.

"Now the ceremony of introducing you into the bed-chamber of theſe fair ladies is over

over, 'tis time for us to think of proceeding, my old friend, (ſaid Edwin.) If you will aſſiſt me in unfaſtening the trap-door, we will procure lights, and, putting ourſelves under your direction, follow wherever you are diſpoſed to lead us.

CHAP. V.

IT was the intention of Bertrand to open the door of the ſubterranean paſſage, which communicated with Mettingham-caſtle; but, before they proceeded far, ſomething ruſhed paſt them ſeveral times: it was rapid, and their candle threw ſo feeble a light on the walls which ſurrounded them, that they could not diſcover what it was.

They hurried on till they came to the ſquare leading to the dungeons, when their attention

attention was arreſted, and their fears increaſed by the barking of a dog. They heſitated, looked with aſtoniſhment at each other, and ſtopped, as if irreſolute whether to return or proceed. In the mean while, the little animal made its appearance, jumped and capered about, as if it rejoiced at ſeeing them in its dreary habitation, attached itſelf particularly to Roſeline, and ſeemed to recognize an old and beloved friend.

Roſeline took it up in her arms, kiſſed and careſſed it; but how to account for meeting with ſo beautiful, fond, and gentle a creature was not only matter of ſurpriſe but wonder.

"Are you ſure, ſiſter, (ſaid Edwin, ſlily glancing a look at the pale face and trembling lips of the terrified Madeline,)—are you ſure it is a real dog?—May it not be one of the ghoſts, who, in ſuch various ſhapes, are ſaid to haunt theſe gloomy regions, and

diſturb the peaceful ſlumbers of young maidens, born perhaps two hundred years after they had left the world ?"

This gentle reproof reſtored the roſes to the fair cheek from which fear had driven them, while Roſeline declared it was really and truly the prettieſt dog ſhe had ever ſeen. Bertrand had looked thoughtful, agitated, and confuſed, from the moment it appeared.

"This dog muſt have a maſter, (ſaid Edwin,) and that maſter muſt be ſomewhere near theſe cells."

"Perhaps (ſaid Bertrand) ſome daring villain may have found entrance here, either with the hopes of plunder, or to accompliſh deſigns againſt the caſtle; let us therefore, for the preſent, give up attempting to explore the paſſage; it might be dangerous to unfaſten a door which is now our ſecurity."

"Had

"Had we not better call for help?" ſaid the again-terrified Madeline.

"Not for the world! (interrupted Edwin;)—how ſhould we be able to account to my mother for being in this place, without burthening her mind with ten thouſand ſuſpicions? while, telling her our reaſons would moſt aſſuredly expoſe our venerable companion to the certain diſpleaſure of my father.—Do you (ſaid he, addreſſing Bertrand) know if there is any one a priſoner at this time?"

The old man heſitated.—"I know but little—I apprehend it may be ſo,—but I—I hope you will excuſe my talking on a ſubject that—that——"

"It muſt aſſuredly be ſo, (ſaid Roſeline ſoftly to her brother,) and from that cauſe proceeded the noiſes which ſo repeatedly alarmed us."

Again every one ſtood for a moment irreſolute. Edwin, however, fearful of bringing

his father's anger on Bertrand, and ſcorning to tempt the old man to betray any truſt repoſed in him, or any ſecret belonging to another, inſtantly formed his reſolution to act with the utmoſt caution. He propoſed to his ſiſter and Madeline to return to their apartment as ſoon as Bertrand had pointed out the paſſage which led to the nunnery.—On being ſhewn the door which might one day enable him to meet his Madeline, and open to give him a gleam of happineſs, Roſeline ſnatched up the little dog, preſſed him to her boſom, and vowed to releaſe him from captivity.

As ſoon as they had reached their own apartment, Bertrand, after promiſing eternal ſecrecy, took a reſpectful leave. Edwin accompanied him to his room, then returned to his ſiſter's, and propoſed inſtantly renewing their ſearch.

"This is doing nothing, (ſaid he;) all is ſtill left to conjecture and uncertainty."

"If

"If you mean to go again, (ſaid Madeline,) why did you ſuffer Bertrand to leave us?"

"From reſpect to my father and regard to the old man, (he replied;) for ſhould we, my dear Madeline, make any diſcovery of conſequence, with us the ſecret will reſt ſecure, and, ſhould we be found out, on ourſelves alone will fall the diſpleaſure of Sir Philip; but, by this procedure, we empower no one either to betray his ſecrets or our own. We will, however, carry back with us this little ſtranger, (continued he, pointing to the dog, who was ſleeping on a cuſhion which Roſeline had placed for him before the fire,) and, when we ſet him down, we will follow wherever he may chooſe to lead us: if he be attached to any miſerable being confined in one of the cells or dungeons, we may depend upon his returning to his uſual habitation."

Once more the trap-door was lifted up; once more the party deſcended into regions

like thoſe of the grave, while the mouldering walls, glittering with the dews of night, and rendered humid with the unwholſome damps of the ſituation, hung looſe and diſjointed over their heads, as if to threaten inſtant deſtruction.

Turning into a paſſage which led to a contrary direction to that they had before entered, and which was ſomewhat wider and leſs diſmal than the other, Roſeline ſat down the dog, who ran nimbly away, as if well acquainted with the path. They followed with the utmoſt caution, obſerving a profound ſilence. The dog went before them the whole length of the paſſage, then turned ſuddenly down a few ſteps, at the bottom of which a door ſtood half-open: he ruſhed in, and appeared to them to ſtop at ſome diſtance. Inſtantly they heard him growl and bark, and this determined them to proceed.

They paſſed through two ſmall apartments decently furniſhed, and, juſt as they reached

reached an inner door, at which the dog had demanded admittance, they ſaw it ſlowly open, and a faint voice appeared to chide the guiltleſs wanderer for his long, long abſence, and then to careſs him with fondneſs.

Edwin, knowing, if he heſitated to proceed, the fears of his companions would increaſe by the delay, gently tapped at the door. For a minute all was ſilent; he then gave ſome louder raps. The ſame perſon very ſoon opened the door, of whom they had caught a tranſient glimpſe when he had granted admittance to the dog. He was evidently alarmed, and in tremulous and terrified accents inquired who was there,— what was the matter,— and what errand brought them? at the ſame time brandiſhing a ſword, which he had haſtily ſnatched from a chair which ſtood near him.

"Whoever you are (continued he) that have found a way to this den of miſery, you may ſafely enter, unleſs you come to add

farther oppreſſions, and inflict additional woes on the head of an injured and guiltleſs ſufferer. If you come with ſuch diabolical intentions, be aſſured of this,—I will no longer be a paſſive or ſilent ſpectator of ſuch unheard of barbarity, but give up a life in his defence which cruelty has rendered a worthleſs ſacrifice. Forego then your deſigns, and know he will not long be either a burthen or reproach to his unnatural parent and ſordid oppreſſors."

"We come with no deſign to injure or oppreſs, (ſaid Edwin.) We inhabit this caſtle, and were led by the curioſity incidental to youth into theſe horrid regions.—Chance conducted us into theſe apartments, without knowing they were inhabited.—We wiſh not to alarm or interrupt any one, but of this be aſſured, if you will inform us how we can ſerve you, or render your ſituation more comfortable, we will gladly contribute all in our power to do ſo. Your countenance does not appear ſtamped with guilt,

guilt, and your determination to protect the injured ſpeaks a noble mind."

The ſword was inſtantly laid down,—the door flew open,—and they were requeſted to enter by one, who told them his life and courage were only valuable ſo long as they would enable him to watch and protect the beſt and moſt beloved of maſters.

Reader, gueſs, if it be poſſible, the ſurpriſe and aſtoniſhment of our trembling and compaſſionate adventurers, when they beheld an elegant young man, whoſe countenance was as prepoſſeſſing as his ſituation was intereſting, wrapped in a ſtriped-ſatin morning-gown, which reached to his feet, with his hair hanging in graceful ringlets, and nearly concealing a face pale as death, lying on a kind of couch, and to all appearance in the laſt ſtage of a conſumption.

On the entrance of Edwin, he took but little notice, but, on ſeeing Roſeline and her

friend advance, he looked up, and attempted to riſe, but was not equal to the effort, and inſtantly ſunk down in a ſtate of apparent inſenſibility. Roſeline, more agitated and terrified by the whole of this unaccountable and affecting ſcene than ſhe would have been at the ſight of the ghoſt ſhe had almoſt expected to meet, flew to ſupport him. She was aſſiſted by Edwin and Madeline, and their united endeavours ſoon reſtored the poor ſufferer to life and an imperfect ſenſe of his ſituation.

Having now no longer any fears, he fixed his large blue eyes on the ſtrangers,— wondered from whence they came,—how all this could happen,—and to what bleſſed chance it was owing that he ſaw himſelf attended and conſoled by two celeſtial beings, for as ſuch he actually conſidered them; while the pure drops of genuine and the gentleſt pity fell ſoftly on his emaciated hand, he raiſed the precious gems of compaſſion to his lips, ſighed deeply, then, looking earneſtly

neſtly in the face of Roſeline, with a ſmile of doubt and anguiſh once more ſunk down in a ſtate of inſenſibility, unable to bear the weight of his own agitated and contending feelings.

The attendant, who had ſtrictly obſerved the whole of this extraordinary ſcene, now approached to aſſiſt in recovering his maſter. Edwin haſtened to his ſiſter's apartment to procure proper reſtoratives; they were applied with their uſual ſucceſs, and the change they produced gave new life and ſpirits to all around, particularly Roſeline, who concluded they arrived merely to witneſs his dying moments, and hear him breathe his laſt ſigh.

She was ſtill ſupporting his languid head on her knee; his hand reſted on her arm, his eyes were fixed upon her face, his lips moved, and the words "kind, conſoling angel" were all they could underſtand.

"What

"What can this mean? (ſaid Edwin;) who is your maſter?—who brought him here? and of what crime has he been guilty that he is ſentenced to ſuch a place as this?"—

"I am bound (replied the ſervant) by the moſt ſolemn oath to ſilence and ſecreſy. By complying with theſe conditions I obtained leave to attend him. Were I at liberty to ſpeak, I could a tale unfold would tempt you to curſe the world, and even deteſt thoſe claims which bind man to man. You would be ready to forego the ties of nature, and ſhun ſociety.— Time will, it muſt develop the whole of this myſtery."

"But my father!" ſaid Edwin.

"Your father, ſir, like my dear unhappy maſter, is blameleſs and innocent: he has been deceived like many others."

"But why (cried Roſeline) are you thus ſhut out from the world, and baniſhed ſociety?—why, if innocent, is not this poor ſufferer placed in a ſituation more likely to

reſtore

reſtore him to health?—why thus cruelly deprived not only of liberty, light, and air, but of every other neceſſary comfort?"

"A higher power has willed it ſhould be ſo," ſaid the ſtranger, whoſe unreſerved manner, ſuperior language, honeſt and open countenance, found an inſtant paſſport to their hearts, confirmed their belief, and baniſhed every ſuſpicious doubt of his ſincerity.

"Are you involved in the crimes of which this gentleman is ſuſpected?" inquired Madeline.

"No, madam; my only crime is my attachment to him. I am here by my own voluntary choice, and were they to convey him a thouſand fathoms deeper in the earth, I would not, unleſs I were compelled, ever leave him till his noble and guiltleſs ſoul was ſummoned to appear before a more juſt and merciful tribunal than he has found on earth."

"A

"A thouſand bleſſings on you! (cried Roſeline, a tear trembling in each expreſſive eye,) for ſhewing this care and god-like compaſſion to one ſo helpleſs and oppreſſed. —Brother, ſurely we may, without deſerving reproach, unite our endeavours with thoſe of this friendly ſtranger, to ſoften the pangs of miſery and death, be they inflicted by whom they may."

"You ought to do ſo, (cried the lovely Madeline, whoſe gentle ſpirit was awakened into action by the ſcene before her.)—As fellow-creatures, and the children of the ſame Almighty Parent, it is our duty to aſſiſt each other; but we ſhould do more, nor remain coldly indifferent to ſufferings which, if we cannot entirely remove, we may in ſome meaſure alleviate."

"And we will do ſo! (cried the generous and animated Edwin.)—You too, my honeſt fellow, (turning to the ſervant,) ſhall ſhare in our kind offices. You deſerve the thanks of every good Chriſtian, and to be

immortalized

immortalized for your faithful attachment to one ſo helpleſs and unable to reward you.—But how is this ?" obſerving the invalid had ſunk into a gentle and quiet ſleep, like the peaceful ſlumber of an infant.

" This has been the caſe for ſome weeks. His ſpirits depreſſed by the corroding anguiſh which preys upon his mind, his body has become a victim to the conflict, and the ſoul of my maſter will ſoon, by quitting this earthly tenement, eſcape the farther perſecution of his enemies. Much, much as I love him, I ſhould rejoice at his releaſe."

The words trembled on his tongue, and the tear of manly compaſſion rolled down his cheek.

" Has he no one to attend him ? (ſaid Roſeline, looking at him with eyes that beamed with all the heavenly animation which at that moment throbbed around her heart ;) has he no advice ?"

' Only

"Only ſuch as I can give him, madam. Poor and ignorant as I am, he has never been allowed any other phyſician, or better tutor than myſelf; but I truſt, if the Almighty would again reſtore him to health, he would now meet with thoſe who would aſſiſt in performing a taſk for which I was never calculated."

"Has he no bed to ſleep on?" cried Roſeline, gently removing his languid head upon a cuſhion that laid on a couch, without awakening him.

"There is one in the inner apartment, but this being the moſt comfortable and airy room, he will not leave it."

"I will fetch ſome pillows."

She did ſo; they were inſtantly placed under his head. Still he ſlept as if he were never to awake again.

"In the morning, (ſaid Roſeline,) at the foot of the ſtairs, which you will find by turning to the left, at the end of this paſſage, I will leave ſome few trifles and comfortable

ſortable cordials, which I hope will be of ſervice.

"And to-morrow night, at about this time, you may expect us again, (ſaid Edwin.) I hope your maſter will then have ſhaken off this death-like ſlumber, and be able to converſe with us."

"Perhaps he may, (replied Albert, the name of this faithful ſervant;) but he never talks much. I had taught him to read, but they took away our books, and ſince that time I am afraid he has loſt the remembrance of the little knowledge he had of reading. He has lately learned to play a few ſimple tunes on the lute,—that ſometimes amuſes him."

"We will bring you ſome books, (ſaid Roſeline,) and ſurely, Edwin, you and I can aſſiſt Albert in the delightful taſk of reſtoring by friendſhip what has been loſt by cruelty."

Albert informed them they were regularly ſerved with their meals, but never ſaw the perſon

perſon who brought them, all intercourſe with any one being forbidden, to prevent the poſſibility of diſcovery or eſcape; but, he ſaid, they had better food and more indulgences than had been allowed them in their former priſon, which conſiſted only of one room.

The party now retired with the utmoſt caution, leſt they ſhould diſturb the apparently-peaceful ſlumbers of the priſoner, and deprive him of his only refuge from miſery.

Before they parted, Roſeline and her brother, actuated by the ſame generous feelings in behalf of this unfortunate young man, and his equally unfortunate companion, ſatisfied, ſhould there be found any thing in their conduct to condemn, (which they could not bring themſelves to think,) in their preſent ſituation there was much to pity, reſolved to unite in their endeavours of relieving their miſeries, and ſoftening the

rigours

rigours of a confinement, of which they knew not the cauſe; but they were told, the object who had moſt excited their compaſſion was innocent, and therefore they determined to think him ſo till his own conduct, or an explanation from any other quarter, proved him otherwiſe. It is true, they had nothing on which to found their belief but the word of a ſtranger, and him they found in the humble capacity of a ſervant; but, though a ſtranger, he had, by his ſimple, modeſt, and unaffected language, given ample proofs in their opinion of his ſincerity.

They now left the cells, and retired inſtantly to bed,—dreamed of the priſoner, and ſometimes imagined they could diſtinguiſh his groans; in fact, they thought and talked of him, and him only.

Early in the morning, Roſeline carried every little nicety ſhe could procure, and left them

them at the foot of the ſtairs,—then hurried back to her room, not daring to ſtop and make inquiries, leſt the perſon who ſupplied the object of her pity with his daily food ſhould diſcover and betray her benevolent deſigns.

Madeline was now making a rapid progreſs in her recovery, and was every hour in fear of receiving a ſummons from the abbeſs to return to the nunnery. Edwin participated in all her fears, and lamented, in the language of tender affection, the cruel neceſſity which compelled her to leave the caſtle, proteſting neither walls nor vows ſhould long divide them, and ſwearing to releaſe her from a ſituation, which, though ſanctioned by religion, only bigotry, ſuperſtition, and prieſtcraft, could juſtify; which he knew would not only deſtroy all his proſpects of happineſs, but, as he could not diſbelieve the faſcinating hopes he had not abſolutely been forbidden to cheriſh, the happineſs alſo of a beloved object, dearer

to

to him than life, without whom fortune, honour, proſperity, and youth, would be robbed of all their value.

The next day, accompanied by Bertrand, Edwin ſtole by another entrance into the lower receſſes of the caſtle, not mentioning a word of the priſoner, and carefully avoiding that quarter in which he was confined. They firſt explored the ſubterraneous paſſage, leading to the nunnery, and found fewer impediments in their way than they expected. They eaſily gained an entrance into the chapel, having fixed upon an hour when they knew all the fathers and nuns would be engaged in their cells. They found the opening under the organ, and in that part of the chapel appropriated to the uſe of the nuns, the door being concealed from obſervation by a very curious tomb, belonging to the ancient family of De G—.

They entered next the paſſage leading to Mettingham-caſtle, and determined to

ſee the whole of it. Here they met with many difficulties: in ſome places huge ſtones had fallen from the walls,—in others the arch-way was ſo low they were almoſt obliged to crawl,—while toads, ſnakes, and various kinds of reptiles impeded their progreſs; when, at length, they reached the end of this wonderful labyrinth, the production of labour and art, they found themſelves cloſe to the ballium of Mettingham-caſtle, and under a ſtrong machiolated and embattled gate.

They now diſcovered another ſhort paſſage, which was terminated by a door that opened to the outer ballium, and through which the cavalry could ſally in any caſe of emergency. They ventured cautiouſly to look around them. Edwin's mind, however, was chiefly occupied by one dear object, and he ſecretly rejoiced at having found the means of eſcaping with Madeline, ſhould the obſtinacy of her parents, or the ambition

ambition of his own, leave him no other reſource.

He likewiſe, in the courſe of the day, but unaccompanied by any one, opened the door on the ſtair-caſe leading to the South tower. He felt a kind of repugnance at taking this ſtep, but determined, as matters were now circumſtanced, to go through the whole of this unpleaſant buſineſs at once, that nothing might be left to conjecture. He alſo recollected that it would not only put an end to that reſtleſs curioſity which had long dwelt upon his mind, but enable him to judge whether it would be poſſible to remove the dying priſoner into a more airy and convenient room, without the hazard of a diſcovery.

This wing of the caſtle he knew was totally unoccupied, as in his boyiſh days he had frequently, and at all times gone that way to the ramparts to lodge his playthings in a ſecret apartment in one of the higheſt

towers, and never in his peregrination had met with a human being.

On attempting firſt to open the door, he was a good deal ſtartled at the noiſe it occaſioned, and was almoſt buried beneath the heap of cobwebs and dirt which fell and enveloped him in a cloud of duſt.—Some birds too, that had here found a ſafe aſylum, flew in terror around him. Not willing to diſturb them more than was neceſſary, he unfaſtened a narrow caſement, to give thoſe an opportunity of eſcaping who wiſhed to obtain their liberty. He then ſtole ſoftly and cautiouſly acroſs the room to an oppoſite door, which opened without any difficulty, and he entered a ſecond apartment, much larger and more commodious than the firſt. It was hung with ancient tapeſtry, on which time and moth had made many depredations; but, in ſome parts of it, the full-length figures remained perfect, and the colours retained

ſome

ſome of their beautiful ſhades. He ſoon diſcovered that it repreſented the moſt ſtriking and intereſting ſcenes in the well-known hiſtory of Hero and Leander, from his firſt ſeeing her, in the temple of Venus, at Seſtos, in Thrace, till the laſt cloſing ſcene of their unfortunate loves.

The figures of the lovers were fine, and in excellent preſervation, and the tapeſtry was of ſo ſuperior a kind, that it gave as full force and expreſſion to the faces and drapery as the fineſt painting could have conveyed. The temple, the palace, the turret, and the Helleſpont, upon whoſe waves the riſing and ſetting ſun were alternately reflected, with the downy ſwan, in ſnowy dignity, which was ſeen laving on its boſom were admirably depicted.

The nurſe, or attendant of the faithful Hero ſtood at full length on the edge of the water, which gently undulated near the walls of the palace, pointing to the waves,

and as if in the act of telling her fond, impatient miſtreſs her lover was coming, while ſhe, with modeſt ſweetneſs, ſeemed fearful of ſtealing a look at the element which contained a treaſure dearer to her ſoul than the whole of her ambitious father's dominions.

In another part, he ſaw the lifeleſs body of Leander, and the deſpairing Hero in the act of throwing herſelf into the Helleſpont, which had unfortunately proved the grave of her lover.

Edwin ſtood a long time, ſilently admiring this pathetic tale: it had an inſtantaneous effect upon his feelings; it ſerved to remind him of the difficulties he ſhould have to encounter in his attachment to Madeline, and he could have kiſſed the ſenſeleſs portrait of the old Egyptian woman for her kind and faithful attentions to the perſecuted lovers.

In

In the middle of the room ſtood a ſquare table, on which were careleſsly ſpread a number of papers. Four maſſy ſilver candleſticks were likewiſe placed upon it, each of which contained a wax-candle, that had never been lighted, and an old writing, to which was annexed a vaſt many ſeals, laid folded up under them.

This he concluded was the myſtic bond which held in captivity the reſtleſs ſpirit it was ſuppoſed to confine. Edwin opened and attempted to read it. In ſome parts the writing was defaced, and the whole of the language ſo unintelligible, he very ſoon replaced it in its former ſituation, imagining that, if the ghoſt was not to regain its liberty till the bond could be read, it would reſt in peace for ever, and ſuffer others to do the ſame.

In the chimney ſtood an antique grate, that had once been bright, and ſtill ſhewed ſome of its brilliant features through the

ruſt by which it was enveloped. A few chairs were ſtanding here and there, but they were falling to decay. He then opened another door, which led him into a vaulted chamber, in which were placed the tattered remains of a bed, that had been handſome, and could be repaired. A book of devotion was lying upon it. The windows were high and narrow, admitting but little light, notwithſtanding which they were ſecured by iron bars of immenſe thickneſs, ſo ſtrongly, that, had they been lower, it would have been impoſſible for the arm of the ſtrongeſt man to remove or ſhake them.

This led him to conclude it was originally deſigned for the ſecurity of priſoners of rank, its diſtance from the ground precluding any communication with the people on guard; and he ſhuddered as he recollected how many, like the poor priſoner in the cells, might have lingered away their wretched

wretched exiſtence in this very apartment, in the hopeleſs expectation of meeting with a releaſe.

He next carefully ſearched in every part of the room, to diſcover if there was not a more ſecret entrance, but found none.—He put the key into his pocket, as he had before done that of the trap-door, and in the morning, unobſerved by Bertrand, had the precaution not to lock the door of the ſubterraneous paſſage, leaving it well ſecured by the bolts and bars which were on the inſide.

He now haſtened to replace all the reſt of the keys in the repoſitory from whence he had taken them, and was ſatisfied thoſe he retained in his own poſſeſſion would not be miſſed by his father or any one elſe.

After this he returned to join the family, and ſaid not a word of what he had ſeen,

nor the plans which floated in his own mind, in consequence of the morning peregrinations he had taken.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

IN the courſe of the day, Roſeline aſked a thouſand queſtions, with apparent indifference, of De Clavering, reſpecting the nature of conſumptive caſes, their ſymptoms, progreſs, &c. and how people ought to manage themſelves in regard to diet, who were confined in the damp regions of a dungeon, or immured in the narrow precincts of a priſon; to all which ſhe received ſuch plain, direct, and experienced anſwers, as ſhe cheriſhed hopes would enable her, with the approbation of heaven, to be the

humble means of reſtoring to health, or a more promiſing degree of convaleſcence, the intereſting object whoſe ſecret ſufferings had ſtimulated her to make theſe unuſual inquiries; and what gave new life and added energy to her benevolent hopes was the arrival of a letter from Sir Philip to Lady de Morney, in which he was reluctantly obliged to inform her that his ſtay in London was unfortunately prolonged, and he was ſorry to find his abſence from the caſtle was likely to be protracted a conſiderable length of time from the ſlow progreſs of the law, and the difficulties thrown in the way by his opponents. This account would have given her pain a few days before; it was now a ſource of pleaſure, which produced the moſt ſanguine expectations of preſerving, under Providence, the life of a fellow-creature, or, at leaſt, of rendering its cloſing ſcene leſs hopeleſs and more comfortable.

A ſenſibility, like that which was lodged in the boſom of the artleſs and innocent

Roſeline,

Roſeline, I would wiſh all my ſex to poſſeſs. So far from tempting her to run from miſery, it led her in ſearch of it, and, when found, it awakened every gentle paſſion of the mind into immediate and reſolute action; while the fictitious feeling, the affected ſenſibility of a modern miſs is confined to kicking, fainting, or ſqualling at ſight of a wretched object, and the little they may really have will evaporate in the trouble of acting their part ſo as to impoſe on the minds of others an unjuſt ſenſe of their own delicate and extreme compaſſion.

How much might men as well as women add to the dignity of nature by never attempting to deſtroy her!! In the formation of man, God lent his own image; how would it aſtoniſh, how would it excite the indignation of the almoſt unenlightened ſavage, if he met with any one ſo fooliſh as to ſuppoſe they could improve that image by the ridiculous diſtortions and grimaces of affectation! and how would he be di-

verted, could he ſee the devoted ſlaves of faſhion ſo diſguiſe the human form, that the head is frequently increaſed to twice its original ſize,—the waiſt ſometimes dwindled to a ſpan, at others entirely loſt; then again reſtored with ſuch protuberances as even to render the character ſuſpected;—and at times our modern beaux and belles are ſeen ſo completely in maſquerade, that it is a matter of ſome difficulty to diſtinguiſh one ſex from the other,—a circumſtance that might be attended with ludicrous, if not dangerous, conſequences.

As the ſpirits of Lady de Morney were much depreſſed by the receipt of Sir Philip's letter, every one exerted themſelves to amuſe her. They ſung, they danced, and the tale went merrily round. De Willows and De Clavering appeared unuſually animated, and Hugh Camelford fared the worſe for their exertions. They rouſed the fiery blood of the brave Cambrian, and then cooled it again by a well-turned compliment.

They

They likewiſe ſo powerfully aſſailed Elwyn to give a dinner he had long promiſed them, that the following day was fixed for the treat, and his apartments were prepared for the ladies, the gentlemen with one voice agreeing not to go without them. They alſo entered into a confederacy to drink till they had emptied the miſer's laſt bottle, determining to have one good frolic, as they deſpaired of ever obtaining a ſecond at his expence.

Madeline received a few lines from Agnes de Clifford, to inform her, that, by what ſhe could learn from one of the old nuns, the abbeſs expected her return to the nunnery the following week, as father Anſelm had ſignified his diſapprobation of her longer abſence. This gave great concern to the young people, which did not paſs unobſerved by Lady de Morney, who gently blamed them, adding, as they had been ſo long indulged with the company of their friend,

friend, they ought to ſubmit to the will of the father without repining or reluctance.

After a day which appeared to Roſeline the longeſt ſhe had ever lived, the hour arrived in which they were to reviſit the dark abode of miſery and oppreſſion. They found Albert impatiently waiting for them in the paſſage, near the foot of the ſtairs, almoſt deſpairing of their return. Every one carried ſomething for the uſe and gratification of the priſoner. Edwin was loaded with books; Madeline with ſweetmeats, wine, and cakes; Roſeline with ſome white meats and ſoup. She had likewiſe prepared a reviving mixture from a recipe of De Clavering's, extracted from a variety of healing herbs, admirably calculated to reſtore health and ſpirits to the fragile frame of the languid ſufferer.

Albert informed them that his maſter conſidered the whole of what had paſſed the preceding evening as a dream;—had repeatedly

edly mentioned the good and conſoling angels, who had condeſcended to viſit the couch of a wretch who, almoſt from his birth, had been an outcaſt from ſociety; and, notwithſtanding he aſſured him he would ſee them again, he could obtain no credit to his aſſertion, nor divert his mind from the idea that it was a warning from heaven, merely to prepare him for a ſummons before its awful tribunal.

"Haſten, my good friend, (ſaid Roſeline,) and undeceive him, by letting him know we wait here to convince him, if he will receive us, that we are mere mortals like himſelf."

Albert did not ſtop for a ſecond command to execute a commiſſion he eagerly wiſhed. They followed him; the little dog ran out, and greeted their arrival with every teſtimony of joy it was in its nature to expreſs, and they were requeſted to walk in the moment they reached the door of the

the apartment. They were not only ſurpriſed, but highly gratified at obſerving the viſible change for the better which a few hours had made in the countenance of their new friend, whoſe dependence on their good offices, for many of the neceſſary comforts of life, and total ſecluſion from the world, made very forcible claims on their hearts.

He aroſe on their entrance. Edwin flew to embrace him. Madeline held out her hand, which he gently preſſed between his; but, obſerving that Roſeline's was likewiſe extended, he dropped the hand of her friend, and eagerly caught her's, as if he were afraid it ſhould be wreſted from him.

"I would fain tell you what I feel at this moment, (ſaid he, faintly and fearfully;) but I do not know a language to make myſelf underſtood.—This I know, that yeſterday I wiſhed to die, and be forgotten even by Albert; but now I think, if I could have you always with me, (ſtealing a look at

at Roſeline,) hear you talk, and ſee you ſmile, I could be content to live for ever, even in this ſad place. If all other women are like you, how charming muſt be the world, in which Albert ſays there are a vaſt many! I have often told him, and he knows why, that I never ſhould like a woman; (here he ſmiled expreſſively on Albert.) I thought they were all very cruel and very ugly creatures, therefore I concluded, when I firſt ſaw you, that you were angels, or kind and celeſtial ſpirits, who came down from heaven to receive my ſoul, and carry it to a place of reſt."

"Indeed, my good ſir, (ſaid Roſeline,) you were never more miſtaken. We are like the generality of our ſex, but much inferior to many. We broke in upon you unexpectedly, and you judged merely from feelings too highly raiſed, which originated from ſurpriſe, and were in part confirmed by the effect they had on the ſuſceptibility of your nature and the ſecluſion of your

ſituation.

ſituation.—I muſt now entreat you to take a few ſpoonfuls of a mixture I have brought you. I am afraid it is not very pleaſant to the taſte, but I hope and truſt it will be conducive to your recovery."

She poured ſome into a tea-cup, and preſented it to him; he drank it immediately. They then produced the more grateful treat they had brought with them; he ate a little cake, and ſome ſweetmeats, with an avidity and greedineſs that ſhocked them,—ſaid they were very fine, and much better than the liquor.

Edwin next gave him ſome books, which he opened with eagerneſs, ſeemed vaſtly delighted with the prints, but ſhook his head on finding himſelf unable to read their contents. He turned over a few of the leaves, and ſeemed a good deal chagrined. Edwin explained their titles, and gave him a few outlines of the works.

"Albert can read them," ſaid he.

"I

"I hope you will ſoon be able to read them yourſelf, (replied Edwin:) we will join with Albert in inſtructing you."

"Ah! (cried he, ſhaking his head,) you will ſoon grow weary of one ſo ignorant, ſo dull as I am; (his eye glanced at Roſeline.)—I belong to no one,—I have no friend but poor Albert; he will not leave me to die alone in ſuch a place as this."

"My dear ſir, (ſaid Albert,) talk not of dying the very firſt hour you are beginning to live, I yet truſt we ſhall ſee many happy years."

He looked melancholy, whiſpered ſomething they could not perfectly underſtand, and appeared wholly loſt in his own painful reflections. Edwin again addreſſed him.—At hearing his voice he ſtarted, and gazed on him with a wild and vacant ſtare, as if he had never ſeen him before, looked at his dreſs, then at his own,—ſeemed ſtruck by the contraſt, and a faint ſmile came over his

his features, but it was the ſmile of internal ſadneſs.

It will not be thought ſuperfluous, perhaps, if we ſtop a few moments, in order to deſcribe, as well as we are able, the face, perſon, and dreſs, of this unfortunate young man. His complexion, from never having been expoſed to either air or ſun, was whiter and more delicate than that of Madeline: his large blue eyes were ſhaded by deeply-fringed eye-laſhes, and arched with eye-brows which the niceſt pencil of the painter could not have improved. His face was oval, his noſe aquiline, and his mouth ſo exquiſitely formed, as to give grace and expreſſion to all the other features: he was much thinner, but ſome inches taller than Edwin; yet the whole of his appearance ſhewed that confinement and ill health had ſtolen, in their thieviſh and deſtroying progreſs, many of the natural graces from his face and perſon: his hair waved in careleſs ringlets over his forehead, and hung down ſome

ſome length on his ſhoulders; he was ſtill wrapped in a looſe morning gown, wore ſlippers, and his linen was of the fineſt texture.

With ſome difficulty, but not without the aſſiſtance of Albert, they drew him by degrees into ſomething like converſation; but he did not appear perfectly to underſtand all they ſaid; and, when they mentioned the days beginning to lengthen, the increaſing and reviving influence of the ſun, the beauty of the moon and ſtars, he ſighed,—wiſhed he could ſee and admire them as other men did, and inquired if they thought any but himſelf and Albert were denied ſo many of the bleſſings which he had been told God had given for the uſe and benefit of all his creatures. Edwin replied, painful as it was to recollect, he had no doubt but at that moment thouſands of his fellow-mortals ſuſtained even greater hardſhips and deprivations than himſelf.

"Muſt

"Muſt you and theſe ſweet creatures ever do the ſame?"

He hoped not, but fortune was ſo fickle in the favours ſhe beſtowed, and every thing ſo uncertain, it was impoſſible to tell what might or might not happen in the courſe of a few years.

"It is ſurely very ſtrange, (ſaid the priſoner,) and I think thoſe people, whoſe hard hearts and hands contrived and made priſons, are the moſt proper, indeed the only perſons who ſhould be forced to inhabit them."

This obſervation produced a general ſmile, which they hoped would paſs unnoticed, but it did not eſcape him, and he ſaid, while a faint colour flufhed his cheek, he knew he was very ignorant; but he begged they would not deſpiſe him for ſo great a misfortune. After this he only ventured to aſk a few queſtions, but at the moment of doing ſo ſeemed to ſhrink into himſelf,

himſelf, and to be aſtoniſhed at his own temerity. This ſhyneſs and reſerve they truſted would wear off, as he became familiarized to their viſits and converſation; they therefore took no notice of his abſence or timidity, but endeavoured by every attention to draw him from his own painful and humiliating reflections, and by a few well-timed praiſes ſtrove to give him ſelf-confidence.

After ſtaying as long as time and the nature of their viſit would permit, and giving proper directions to Albert in regard to the medicines and nouriſhing reſtoratives they had brought with them, they reluctantly aroſe to depart. Obſerving their deſign, he held his hands before his eyes, to prevent his ſeeing them go, and exclaimed, "Don't, don't leave me!—I cannot bear it. I never never ſhall ſee you again:—you will forget me, you will leave me for ever!"

His

His extreme agitation alarmed and affected them all. They knew not how to go, and yet to ſtay longer might riſk a diſcovery.

"Speak, Roſeline, (ſaid Edwin,) and if poſſible quiet theſe diſtreſſing apprehenſions."

Roſeline, as ſoon as ſhe could ſufficiently command the tone of her voice, took hold of his trembling hand, which was cold as death, and gently intreated him to hear her with compoſure. He looked at her with paſſive acquieſcence, and ſhe proceeded to aſſure him that it was their united and determined intention to repeat their viſits as often as their own and his ſituation would permit: but that, for his ſake particularly, they were under the neceſſity of acting with caution, and carefully guarding againſt the poſſibility of a diſcovery.—If he were ſo much affected when they left him, they muſt viſit him leſs frequently than they wiſhed.

"Ah!

"Ah! no, no;—do not think of me, or what I may feel: that is of no conſequence, only ſay you will come again and again."

"On my honour we will, and continue to do ſo while you remain an involuntary reſident in this caſtle."

"I am ſatisfied, (ſaid he, ſighing inwardly as he ſpoke; then, fixing his eyes on Roſeline,)—if you would come every day,—talk to me, and look at me thus gently,—if you would continue to pity my weakneſs and pardon my ignorance, I ſhould not think this a priſon but a paradiſe, and could be content to end my uſeleſs days in this dungeon."

This pathetic addreſs Roſeline could not acquire ſufficient reſolution to anſwer, and, while her heart felt intolerably oppreſſed, the ſilent tears, which ſtole ſoftly down her cheek, explained the nature of her feelings. Madeline, finding the ſcene was become too painful, roſe, and bade him good night.

Roſeline gently withdrew the hand which for ſome moments had been claſped in his, and Edwin, ſeeing the neceſſity of immediately retiring, tenderly bade him farewell.—

Finding they were reſolute to depart, he dropped on his knees by the couch, and concealed his face in the pillow. They inſiſted on Albert's not leaving his maſter, and hurried back to their own apartment in a ſtate of mind difficult to be deſcribed, carrying with them a variety of feelings, which, though new and painful, they wiſhed ſhould be retained in their remembrance.

As it was now two hours beyond their uſual time of going to bed, the great clock having ſtruck the aweful hour of twelve, Edwin, without ſtopping to make any comments on the ſcene that had ſo recently occurred, inſtantly took his leave. Madeline put on her night-clothes, and, after talking

talking a few minutes, ſunk into the lethean arms of ſleep. Not ſo her friend; ſleep deſerted her pillow: in vain ſhe ſought and wiſhed for its approach, to obliterate new and uncomfortable ſenſations. It was extremely odd that the image of the priſoner haunted her imagination with ſuch perſevering obſtinacy, that, notwithſtanding ſhe cloſed her eyes, ſhe could not exclude him from her mental ſight; and, what was ſtill more ſtrange and unaccountable, though ſhe ſaw he was leſs poliſhed than thoſe with whom ſhe was accuſtomed to aſſociate, without education, and entirely ignorant of the world,—a priſoner for ſhe knew not what, yet ſtill ſhe thought, and was extremely angry with herſelf for ſo doing, that he was the handſomeſt man, and had the moſt prepoſſeſſing and elegant form ſhe had ever ſeen. His manners too!—could any thing be more captivating than the manners of this uninformed ſon of nature, whom cruelty and injuſtice had immured in the dungeons of her father's caſtle!

A few hours ſleep might, and ſhe truſted would, reſtore her to a more juſt and rational way of thinking; if not, he who cauſed her judgment to miſlead her would perhaps be the means of its returning to its proper ſtation.

We will now therefore leave her to try an experiment, which has often produced as powerful an effect, and, ſtealing the mind by a temporary oblivion from the objects of its ſudden partiality, has likewiſe ſtolen, by the dawn of the ſucceeding morning, all recollection of woes, which, in a moment of unguarded ſuſceptibility, had found a paſſage to the heart. Whether it had this convenient ſoporific, and benumbing property on the mind of Roſeline, we are not now at liberty to declare; but, if it ſhould not, we hope ſome of our readers will make allowance for the unfaſhionable taſte of a young lady, who lived ſo many ages before themſelves; who

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was unhacknied in the devious paths of life, with a mind unvitiated by pride or the pangs of envy, and who had ſeen little or nothing of the world beyond the precincts of the caſtle ſhe inhabited.

CHAP. VII.

THE next day every one prepared with high glee for Elwyn's promiſed treat, and puzzled themſelves with various conjectures as to what kind of feaſt the miſer would ſet before them. Bertha and Hugh Camelford were very buſy after ſomething which thoſe who ſaw them concluded would be productive of mirth or miſchief, no two diſpoſitions being more likely to ſucceed in a cauſe for which their humourous talents were calculated; while poor Elwyn, in ſecret but unavailing regret, lamented

lamented too late his yielding folly, in having been prevailed on to comply with what he termed a very fooliſh and unreaſonable requeſt, viz. for ſo many people to dine at his expence: but this he wiſely kept to himſelf, well knowing, if the party underſtood his ſentiments, it would expoſe him to their whole artillery of wit and ridicule; he therefore made all the preparations for an excellent dinner, but his caution, buſy looks, anxiety, and diſtreſs, promiſed a much higher entertainment than his repaſt could afford.

The company aſſembled at the proper time, and were ſeated in due form and order, Lady de Morney at the head, and Elwyn at the bottom of the table; when, having helped moſt of the party, Camelford requeſted him to ſend him a ſlice of a large raiſed pie, which made a diſtinguiſhed figure.

Bertha cried out with well-affected terror, "Don't touch it; I am ſure 'tis enchanted;

I ſaw the cruſt move."

"Child, (cried Lady de Morney,) what do you mean?"

"What I ſay, madam, for indeed it was lifted up."

"Take care what you are apout, Elwyn, (ſaid Camelford,) or, py Cot, you may cut off the head of a conjurer, who has jumped into the pie in honour of your feaſt."

"Suppoſe we let De Clavering diſſect him, (ſaid De Willows;) he is undoubtedly the beſt hand at cutting up his own ſpecies."

De Clavering, who ſuſpected ſome joke, cautiouſly raiſed up one ſide of the cruſt, when, to the aſtoniſhment of the party, out jumped a ſquirrel. Happy in having regained its liberty, it ſprang acroſs the table, and immediately made its way into Edeliza's pocket, where it was accuſtomed to run for ſhelter. She was ſhocked at the danger from which her favourite had eſcaped, careſſed the little ſtranger, and rejoiced at ſeeing it unhurt.

Every

Every one was ſur riſed and alarmed at the unexpected appearance of poor Pug, while the terror of the maſter of the ceremonies was ſomewhat increaſed, when he ſaw a diſh of blanc mange, which one of the ladies was beginning to help, fall, and a variety of the moſt beautiful ſhapes diſſolve into water. This produced a general and hearty laugh.

"Fine teceptions theſe! (ſaid Camelford.)—I ſuppoſe we ſhall find in the reſt of the pies life cats and togs, and ſee little Pertha turned into a pillar of ſalt." As to Pug, he declared by Cot, Tavy Jones, and the tifel, he never ſaw a coat run ſwifter on his belofed Welch mountains, and he would pet fife hundred kineas he would not be peat if put in podily fear.

The diſhes were removed, and thoſe originally ordered now brought on to fill their places, which, if not altogether productive of ſo much mirth, ſerved to gratify

a more craving and importunate ſenſe.—Elwyn however was highly provoked and mortified at the tricks which had been played him, and ſwore, if he could diſcover the perpetrator, he would inſiſt on an apology, or compel him to take a little cold iron.

"That (ſaid De Clavering) would be rendering your hoſpitality too profuſe. It would not only produce matter for converſation, but in all probability furniſh me with a job that might puzzle or improve me in the art of ſurgery; and, as nature has entailed ſo many diſeaſes on us poor mortals, methinks no reaſonable man would wiſh to increaſe them."

"But, were it not for the unreaſonable, (ſaid De Willows,) you gentlemen of the lancet and gallipot would not find ſufficient opportunities to employ your genius, and give ſuch proofs of your chirurgical ſkill and abilities."

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"On my poor poty (ſaid Hugh Camelford) I hope their apilities never will be tried. Petter to eat ſquirrels, as Elwyn would have tempted us to do, than be cutting up one another for pies and paſties!"

De Huntingfield unfortunately whiſpered to Roſeline that he never ſaw her ſo unuſually ſerious, adding, he ſuppoſed ſhe was thinking of matrimony, and adviſed her to begin her attacks againſt Elwyn, while the generous and hoſpitable fit was upon him; for, if ſhe permitted it to evaporate, Plutus, in all probability would again render every avenue to his heart inacceſſible to the power of love.

This remark brought the roſes into her cheeks. She however denied having formed any deſigns on one whoſe predominant paſſion ſet every other at defiance, and declared herſelf perfectly guiltleſs of all ſuch hoſtile intentions. The hint however was ſuf-

ficient to put her upon her guard, and ſhe exerted herſelf to prevent any further obſervations of the like ſort.

Madeline, now ſatisfied that the heart of Edwin was as much the ſlave of the tender paſſion as her own, and beat reſponſive to her every wiſh, would have reliſhed the cheerful ſcene, had ſhe not, in the very moment of enjoyment, recollected it was the laſt time, for perhaps a long long tireſome period, that ſhe ſhould make one of the happy party.

Edwin, who gueſſed the nature of her feelings, ſympathized too much with her to be more at eaſe. De Clavering, who obſerved them both, gave a humourous diſſertation on the powers of ſympathy, and execrated its effects. The day however paſſed pleaſantly, and the evening concluded with a dance, in which the lively Bertha was permitted to join, and had her favourite Hugh Camelford for a partner.—

Edwin

Edwin withdrew with the ladies at an early hour. The reſt of the gentlemen returned with Elwyn to his apartment, much againſt his inclination, and did not leave him till they had literally fulfilled their agreement of emptying the miſer's laſt bottle; then, conſigning him to the care of his ſervant, with difficulty found their way to their own rooms.

Neither Edwin nor his ſiſter however had forgotten their unfortunate friends. The former had ſtolen an opportunity of conveying a few nice things to the dungeon, had delivered them to Albert, and ſpent half an hour with his maſter, promiſing to renew his viſit in the evening, accompanied by the ladies. This threw a gleam of joy over the countenance of the priſoner, who aſſured him he would not again diſtreſs them by ſhewing ſo much reluctance at parting.

Albert was preſſed by Edwin to enforce the neceſſity of his maſter's endeavouring

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to recover all that he had loſt of his reading, and by that means acquire a proper and uſeful knowledge of the cuſtoms and manners of the world, which would be abſolutely eſſential to the rendering it pleaſant, ſhould he ever obtain his freedom, and become an active member of ſociety.

"I ſhall find but little trouble, ſir, (replied this excellent ſervant,) in doing that which my poor maſter has himſelf been ſo anxious to accompliſh ever ſince he ſaw you and the ſweet ladies, who have made our ſituation in compariſon comfortable. Nature has kindly done much for him, education ſcarcely any thing. Now I foreſee all will be right; he is rouſed from his lethargy of deſponding miſery, and laments his own ignorance in language, that ſhew him truly ſenſible of it. He has inſiſted on being better dreſſed againſt the evening, and the book has not been five minutes out of his hand ſince you left him."

"I

"I will give you all the aſſiſtance in my power, (ſaid Edwin,) and fortunately at this time my father's abſence renders the deſign leſs hazardous. I have likewiſe another plan in my head, which I hope will not only greatly contribute to his comfort, but do much towards the more perfect reeſtabliſhment of his health, which I now begin to think is not quite in the hopeleſs ſtate the alarming ſituation in which I firſt ſaw him led me to imagine."

Edwin next inquired of Albert how his maſter's wardrobe was furniſhed. "I recollect (ſaid he) you mentioned his deſire of changing his dreſs. I can ſupply him with any thing he wants."

"In that reſpect, ſir, my maſter has no occaſion to tax your bounty. Toys and fine clothes were never denied, and for a long time they had their influence, and ſerved to amuſe him."

"Good God! (ſaid Edwin,) that this myſtery could be explained!"

Albert

Albert ſhook his head, and immediately withdrew.

In the evening, Edwin, his ſiſter, and Madeline, viſited the priſoner; but, if they were ſurpriſed before at the happy alteration a few hours had produced in his looks, how much more ſo were they now at obſerving the ſtill greater progreſs in the improvement both of his health and ſpirits.—He was dreſt in the moſt faſhionable ſtile of the times, with an elegance and neatneſs that aſtoniſhed them: every part of his dreſs was ſuch as was only worn by perſons of the higheſt rank,— his clothes richly trimmed, his ſtockings ſilk, and his ſhoes faſtened with gold claſps.

At the approach of Roſeline and her friend, his eyes ſparkled with delight. In fact, he appeared like one raiſed from the grave by a miracle,—new faſhioned and created. It was viſible to all the party that his chief attention was directed to Roſeline. He watched her every look, and the language of

of his artleſs ſoul was eaſily read in every expreſſive and animated feature.

They were now tolerably cheerful. His fear, reſerve, and timidity, began gradually to wear off. He even ventured to addreſs a queſtion to Madeline, and to gaze with tender earneſtneſs on her friend. Edwin, with an arch ſmile, reminded them it would be time to retire, when Roſeline had given proper directions reſpecting her patient, from whoſe rapid recovery he foretold ſhe would reap ſuch honours as would firmly eſtabliſh her reputation, as the firſt female phyſician in the world.

"And as the beſt, the moſt gentle of her ſex," added the priſoner, bluſhing deeply as he ventured to expreſs his gratitude.—"I owe her more than life,—more than—"

"A truce with your thanks, my good friend, (cried Roſeline, now bluſhing in her turn,) and prove, you value our endeavours to render you more comfortable by taking the

the utmoſt care of yourſelf, and by not permitting your mind to dwell on any circumſtance likely to agitate and diſtreſs you."

He promiſed to be directed by his friends, and to follow ſtrictly all their injunctions. Again they could not prevail on themſelves to leave him, till the night was pretty far advanced. On receiving a promiſe from Edwin to viſit him again the next morning, and one from the ladies to be with him in the evening, he ſaw them depart without any violent agitation; yet a viſible gloom and reluctance pervaded his features, not to be concealed by one who never had formed an idea that it was either neceſſary or poſſible to diſguiſe the feelings, or diſavow the ſentiments of the heart.

Happy ſtate of unſpotted unſuſpecting integrity! when no pangs of guilt haraſs and corrode the mind with unceaſing anguiſh! We can ſcarcely prevail upon ourſelves (when

we

we recollect its incorruptible advantages) to think ſuch an enviable portion of internal peace dearly purchaſed even with the loſs of liberty; for, amidſt all his ſufferings, our hapleſs priſoner could not recall one action that hung heavy on his mind, or that awakened the ſcorpion ſting of a reproaching conſcience. His life might juſtly be compared to the ſpotleſs pages of a book, whoſe leaves no blot had yet defiled, but which remained properly prepared to receive the faireſt and moſt laſting impreſſions.

The expected ſummons for Madeline's return to the nunnery arrived. However reluctant to obey ſo unwelcome a mandate, ſhe was obliged to comply. The parting between the lovers was attended with many uncomfortable and unpleaſant feelings.—Melancholy preſentiments were encouraged, which increaſed the diſtreſſes of the moment. She could not leave the priſoner without ſhedding many tears. She even envied his ſituation, and when ſhe compared it

it with her own, it did not appear ſo hopeleſs and ſolitary. He ſtill retained one faithful friend, and had lately met with others, who, if not ſo long known, were equally attached to him: he would likewiſe ſee Edwin every day, while ſhe, immured in the horrid walls of a nunnery, as inimical to her felicity as the air by which he was ſurrounded had till then proved to his, would be denied even the ſoothing influence of hope;—that ignis fatuus of the mind had deſerted its poſt, and left it open to the ſad encroachments of fruitleſs and unavailing regret.—Moſt ſeverely did ſhe now condemn herſelf for ever having quitted the holy aſylum, in which, if ſhe had not found happineſs, ſhe had never felt ſuch conflicts as thoſe ſhe now endured.

Lady de Morney and Roſeline accompanied her to the nunnery, and delivered her up to the maternal care of the abbeſs, and the protection of father Anſelm. They both appeared pleaſed and ſatisfied with her ready

ready compliance with their commands, and rejoiced to ſee her look ſo well. They had ſuffered great anxiety on her account, and the father, who had viſited her frequently during her indiſpoſition, and had cheriſhed but few hopes of her recovery, now told her he truſted ſhe would no more wiſh to forſake their holy ſanctuary, as he doubted not her illneſs was a penance inflicted by Providence for leaving it at a ſeaſon ſo particularly appropriated to the ſacred duties of the church.

Roſeline, before ſhe left the nunnery, accompanied Madeline to her cell, the abbeſs having granted her this indulgence. Here they unobſerved gave way to the ſad luxury of tears. They wept on each other's boſom, and the ſobbing Madeline, deaf to the ſoothing conſolations of her ſympathizing friend, requeſted her to preſent Edwin with her grateful acknowledgments for his many kind attentions, and which in the moment of parting ſhe was unable to expreſs. She hoped

hoped he would not forget her, and begged his ſiſter to aſſure him, that, if ſhe were compelled to take the veil, ſhe ſhould retain his image in her heart, though her life were dedicated to the ſervice of her God. She likewiſe cautioned Roſeline to beware, and guard againſt the ſly and dangerous intruſions of love, which brought with them innumerable ſorrows, and never to encourage hopes, as ſhe had done, which ſhe feared would end in diſappointment and miſery.

Roſeline knew theſe hints alluded to the priſoner: the bluſh which tinged her cheek convinced her friend ſhe was perfectly underſtood. Indeed, ſhe had before ventured to tell her, that, in her attentions to relieve the miſeries ſhe commiſerated, ſhe might become too tenderly a ſharer in them, and, in freeing the captive from his fetters, might herſelf be enſlaved. Roſcline thanked her friend, but denied the caution being neceſſary, and inſtantly took her leave, in order to put an end to a converſation which now became

became unpleaſant, and gave her more pain than ſhe choſe to acknowledge.

The evening, as may be ſuppoſed, paſſed ſlowly and heavily at the caſtle. Roſeline felt unfeigned regret at the departure of her friend, and Edwin found in her abſence the deprivation of happineſs; yet, as it was unavoidable, he determined as much as poſſible to conceal his diſtreſs from the prying eye of ſuſpicion, and to employ every hour he could command, in the ſervice of the unfortunate priſoner, to whom he felt himſelf irreſiſtibly and unaccountably attached; but Edwin, amidſt his family at the caſtle, was not leſs internally wretched than poor Madeline, counting her beads in her ſilent and ſolitary cell.

At the uſual time Roſeline and her brother reviſited the intereſting object of her compaſſion. He expreſſed ſuch rapture at ſeeing them, and made ſo many acknowledgments for their friendſhip, that their minds

minds became inſenſibly harmonized, and their attention engaged.

Edwin now for the firſt time propoſed removing his friend from the dungeon to the haunted chamber, which no one dared to approach, and which we before mentioned as having an entrance from the South tower. Roſeline obtained permiſſion of her mother to keep poſſeſſion of the apartment into which ſhe had accompanied Madeline; therefore they thought his removal could be eaſily accompliſhed without any riſk of a diſcovery. It was agreed that Albert ſhould attend the cells in order to take away the proviſion regularly carried there. All theſe matters ſettled, the following evening was appointed for the accompliſhment of their purpoſe, at the ſame time Edwin cheriſhed the moſt ſanguine hopes that, with the aſſiſtance of Albert, and by means of the ſubterraneous paſſage, he might ſometimes obtain a ſtolen interview with Madeline.

The

The next night Edwin, his ſiſter, and Albert, accompanied the priſoner to his deſtined apartment; but to deſcribe his gratitude and joy, at finding himſelf in a ſituation ſo comfortable and airy, would be impoſſible. Every thing was new and delightful, and in the morning, when the light (which but dimly enlivened his chamber on his arrival) broke in upon his aſtoniſhed ſight, his raptures were alarming, and his faithful attendant, with the utmoſt difficulty, prevailed on him to confine them within the bounds of moderation, and cautiouſly to indulge himſelf in looking at objects ſo ſurpriſing, but to other people ſo familiar, that they ſeldom could ſpare a moment to contemplate them.

When he viewed the ſun, from one of the windows of his room, riſing in its utmoſt ſplendor, had not Albert prevented him, he had fallen on his knees, and worſhipped the brilliant luminary.— He obſerved the birds with ecſtacy, as they lightly ſkimmed

through the boundleſs regions of the air, and liſtened with a kind of throbbing agitation as the lark warbled forth her morning oraiſons, and, not till he had ſhed tears, could he reduce his ſeelings to any degree of compoſure. He admired the trees ; his eyes reſted on ſome of the diſtant hills, and he told Albert he did not think the world had been ſo large and fine a place. He next amuſed himſelf with looking round his apartment, and at every little interval gave way to the effuſions of genuine tranſport.

Can it be wondered that ſo helpleſs a being ſhould feel, on experiencing ſuch a change, more than mere language could expreſs ! Liberated from miſery by the benevolence of ſtrangers,—a thouſand comforts beſtowed which he had deſpaired of ever taſting, his gratitude was as unlimited as his joy, and I am ſure all my readers will pardon him for ſtill continuing to think his benefactors more than mortal ; yet at times he would recollect, with a ſigh of trembling regret,

regret, the dangers to which they expoſed themſelves in order to make him happy.—Their parents, too, might ſhut them in a dungeon for their diſobedience. Theſe reflections fortunately abated the fervour of his high wrought feelings, or in all probability he would have brought on a return of thoſe complaints which had ſo much intereſted his young friends in his behalf.—In a few hours he became more compoſed, and endeavoured to remark every thing around him with ſerenity. As he was now ſituated, Edwin and his ſiſter could ſee him ſeveral times a day without inconvenience or danger, and, to guard againſt any ſurpriſe, they had taken care to lock the door at the foot of the ſtairs, ſtrongly faſtened it within-ſide, and concealed the key, that none of the family might wander that way.

In the evening, a new ſcene preſented itſelf to the ſight of the priſoner. The moon and ſtars were pointed out to him by Edwin. At firſt he miſtook the moon for another

ſun, leſs brilliant, but as beautiful. The ſtars he called little ſuns, and attempted to count their number; and, while his eyes were raiſed in ſilent rapture to the ſpangled firmament, he inquired why ſo much more pains had been taken to decorate the heavens for the night, when mortals ſlept, than for the day, when all nature was awake to wonder and adore. So delighted was he with the ſombre beauties of this all aſtoniſhing ſcene, that it was with the utmoſt difficulty, after Edwin left him, that Albert could prevail upon him to think of retiring to reſt. No ſooner however was he convinced that his faithful attendant had loſt in the arms of ſleep all remembrance of thoſe ſcenes which kept him waking, than he ſoftly ſtole to the window, where he remained till the dews of night and the cold blaſts of an eaſterly wind drove him again to his bed.

The few neceſſary articles which had been allowed him in his former abode were now removed

removed to his preſent one, and ſuch added as would tend to his comfort and convevience. As his food in the dungeon had been conveyed to him by means of a turning cupboard, his having vacated it could not be known ſo long as Albert attended at the proper times to receive it; and, Edwin having ſhewn him another ſecret way, which led from under the ſtairs in the South tower to his old habitation, he would be able to go as often as he pleaſed, without any danger of being diſcovered.

It was now two months after the priſoner's removal before Sir Philip de Morney was able to fix a time for his return. A letter then arrived, in which he mentioned, that, by the end of another fortnight, he hoped to reach the caſtle. He informed Lady de Morney that he ſhould bring a friend with him for whom he had the higheſt regard, and he truſted ſhe would make ſuch neceſſary preparations for his reception, as would ſerve

not only to prove the ſincerity of his attachment, but the high reſpect and eſteem in which he was held by the reſt of the family; telling her it was no leſs a perſonage than Baron Fitzoſbourne, whoſe friendſhip had done him much honour, and in whoſe ſociety he found pleaſure.

Lady de Morney, who perfectly underſtood by her huſband's letter, how anxious he was that his friend ſhould be received with the utmoſt ſplendour and hoſpitality, gave ſuch orders as ſhe hoped would pleaſe the one and gratify the other.

In the mean while, the priſoner made ſuch rapid improvements, as aſtoniſhed and delighted his youthful inſtructors. He was indefatigable in ſtoring his mind with all the knowledge the beſt authors could impart. With returning health his memory regained its former power, and all the natural and brilliant faculties of his mind recovered their uſual ſtrength, and proved he

was

was endowed with more than common capacity and genius. His elegant form, animated features,—the ſerene, enſnaring gentleneſs of his manners, and the mild ſweetneſs of his diſpoſition, unfolded themſelves by degrees, and endeared him beyond expreſſion to his friends.

As a curious and rare plant, guarded by the active hand, and watched by the careful eye of the gardener, raiſes or depreſſes his hopes at firſt putting forth its tender bloſſoms, till a kind and congenial ſeaſon brings it to maturity, and its beauties, ſuddenly burſting on the ſight, prove an ample reward for his foſtering care,—ſo did the heart of Roſeline expand and rejoice at every proof the priſoner gave of the goodneſs of his diſpoſition, and the ſuperior excellence of his underſtanding.

It was clearly viſible to Edwin and to Albert that a mutual paſſion united the priſoner and Roſeline, while every fleeting

hour ſerved more and more to endear them to each other. Edwin, already entangled in the toils of hopeleſs love, and enduring all the pangs of deſpair and apprehenſion, trembled for the fate of a ſiſter for whom he felt an uncommon degree of fraternal affection, but to whom he could not prevail on himſelf to mention a ſubject ſo delicate and diſtreſſing. The priſoner made no attempt to conceal his ardent love for Roſeline:—it was an effort as far beyond his comprehenſion as his power, and, though he made no formal declaration, every word, look, and action, betrayed the ſituation of his heart. Of the world he was totally ignorant; of marriage he had not even thought,—that being a ſubject on which they had never converſed, and his own ſituation, deſperate and hopeleſs as it was, now ſeldom engaged his attention. Roſeline, and Roſeline alone, engroſſed his every idea: while he ſaw her ſmile, and heard the ſound of her voice, he was contented and happy, and, when ſhe was abſent, the wiſh-

wiſh, of rendering himſelf more worthy and better able to converſe with her, ſtimulated him to pay unremitting attention to his own improvement, and the inſtructions he received; but, had he been aſſured he ſhould ſee her no more, he would have ſunk into the ſame apathy and indifference for life and its enjoyments from which her kindneſs had drawn him.

After Madeline had left the caſtle, and before the return of Sir Philip, Edwin, at the utmoſt riſk of a diſcovery, which would have involved him and the object of his regard in danger and difficulties, prevailed upon her to grant him ſeveral interviews in the chapel of the nunnery. One night, Albert, having agreed to accompany him through the ſubterranean paſſage, the trembling nun met them at their entrance, and ſeated near the tomb which concealed the door, liſtened to the vows of her lover.—Equally reluctant to part, they ſat longer than uſual, and heard footſteps in the chapel.

Madeline rightly concluded it was one of the friars come to ſay maſs for the ſoul of a nun lately dead. When the ceremony was ended he departed, and, as the door cloſed after him, the reſolution of Madeline revived. She knew if they had been diſcovered, even the life of Edwin would not be ſecure, and that ſhe ſhould inſtantly be compelled to take thoſe vows from which there was no releaſe but death.

Her own imprudence, and the danger to which her lover was expoſed, ſtruck ſo forcibly upon her mind, that after he left her ſhe could ſcarcely acquire courage to return to the nunnery; and, as ſhe paſſed the aweful and ſilent receptacles of the dead, ſhe was almoſt led to think ſhe heard a friendly voice warn her never again to be guilty of ſo ſacrilegious a crime. She glided quickly by the grave of the nun who had been interred but a few days, and even imagined ſhe could perceive the earth move.—She had no ſooner reached the cell, (into

which

which ſhe hurried without daring to look to the right or to the left, leſt ſhe ſhould ſee the frowning ſpirit of ſome departed ſiſter,) than ſhe fell on her knees, and earneſtly intreated forgiveneſs of the holy virgin. The next morning, far from finding her terrors abate, they gained ſtill greater aſcendancy over her mind, by hearing that father Anſelm had been making inquiries about ſome footſteps he had obſerved in the chapel when he went to early prayers. Recollecting the unguarded warmth of Edwin's temper, and the eager tenderneſs with which in an hour of yielding ſoftneſs he prevailed upon her to indulge him with theſe ſtolen interviews, ſhe was fearful of acquainting him that it was her determination to grant no more.—She wrote to her friend Roſeline, and entreated her to perſuade her brother not to make any attempts in future to ſee her in the chapel; but to them ſhe left the power of procuring as many opportunities as poſſible of meeting without danger. She ſincerely lamented being obliged to deprive

herſelf of the company of a lover to whom ſhe was tenderly attached, and for whoſe ſake ſhe was become an unwilling votary in the ſervice of her God.

This letter was inſtantly communicated to Edwin by his ſiſter. He could not at firſt be eaſily reconciled to a meaſure ſo repugnant to his feelings; but Roſeline adding her intreaties to thoſe of Madeline, and pointing out the neceſſity of it, he became more willing to obſerve the greateſt caution, and to practiſe the moſt rigid preſent ſelf-denial, in order to ſecure his future happineſs. She reminded him that it was now four months before Madeline would enter on her year of probation, previous to which ſomething might happen favourable to their wiſhes; obſerving, that their mother could at any time prevail upon the abbeſs to grant Madeline leave for viſiting the caſtle. Theſe arguments had ſo much effect, that Edwin promiſed his ſiſter to make no farther clandeſtine attempts to ſee her

her friend, till all other means were rendered impracticable.

It happened about this time that Roſeline was prevented, by a ſlight indiſpoſition, from viſiting the priſoner for four or five days. At firſt his alarm and diſtreſs were unſpeakable. It was ſcarcely poſſible to convince him that it was owing to ill health he did not ſee her, and his reſtleſs impatience would have now betrayed the ſecret of his heart, had it not before been diſcovered. He neither ate nor ſlept; all his ſpirits forſook him: the ſun was no longer admired, the moon and ſtars were deprived of their luſtre. He wiſhed to ſhun the light, and, had all nature been loſt in univerſal chaos, it had been a matter of indifference now he ſaw not Roſeline: he wondered what he could have found to admire in any thing with which ſhe was not connected.

Albert obſerved his maſter was very buſy with his pen, and, in removing a port-

folio from his writing table, papers containing the following ſonnets dropped on the floor. He read and copied them, and gave them to Edwin the next time he ſaw him.

Though they were written by one who had never drank at the Parnaſſian fount, love had given ſuch pathos to the language of taſte and nature, that he was charmed, and could not prevail on himſelf to withhold ſuch a treaſure from his ſiſter, to whom in juſtice they belonged, and who like another Iphigenia had in a manner raiſed a phœnix from the ſame inanimate materials of which a Cymon had been formed.

Roſeline, as ſhe read the intereſting proofs of genius and affection, which ſhe wanted not to convince her ſhe was ſincerely beloved, ſhrunk from the agitated and trembling feelings of her own heart, which too well informed her he had nothing to fear from not meeting an equal return of regard. Abſence had been as painful to her

as it had proved to the priſoner, whom love had taught a leſſon equally charming and delightful.

SONNETS TO ROSELINE.

SONNET THE EIRST.

Ah! what to me are birds or flow'rs,
The ſun's moſt radiant light!
I pine away the ling'ring hours,
And ſigh for endleſs night.
Come, Roſeline, ſweet maid, on roſes borne,
Sweet as thyſelf,—unguarded by a thorn!

SONNET THE SECOND.

Fair Roſeline, why didſt thou chaſe the gloom
Which late envelop'd my benighted mind!
Why didſt thou ſnatch me from a living tomb
To ſigh my hopeleſs ſorrows to the wind!

Why

Why was I caught in love's bewitching ſnare,—
Believ'd thee gentle, tender, kind, and fair!

Now thou art abſent, my deſponding ſoul
Has loſt its wonted pow'rs in ſad deſpair;
Reaſon no more my paſſion can controul;
Joy flies with thee, and nought remains but care.
The bleſſings thou haſt giv'n no more have charms,
And my rack'd mind is torn with wild alarms.

With ſoothing words thou didſt my cares beguile,
Taught me the page of learning to explore,
Baniſh'd deſpondence with a gentle ſmile,—
Then left me ſolitary, ſad, and poor.
Would'ſt thou return, and to my pray'r incline,
Methinks a dungeon's gloom would be divine!

If I no more thy beauties muſt behold,
Death ſoon will free me from this painful ſmart;
If a proud rival win thee by his gold,
Soon will deſpair and anguiſh break my heart.
But, though all cares, all ſorrows ſhould be mine,
Heaven ſhower its brighteſt gifts on Roſeline!

SONNET

SONNET THE THIRD.

No more for liberty I pine,
No more for freedom crave;
My heart, dear Roſeline, is thine,—
Thy fond, thy faithful ſlave.

Firſt taught by thee I own'd love's pow'r,
And yielded to my chain;
Sigh through each ſad and cheerleſs hour,
Yet bleſs the pleaſing pain.

Sweet Roſeline, my heart is thine,
It beats alone for thee;
In pity to my vows incline,
Or ſet the captive free.

Like a poor bird, in his lone cage,
I pine and flutter round,
Sullen and ſad, in fruitleſs rage,
Yet ſtill in fetters bound.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

THUS ſtood matters at the caſtle, when Sir Philip de Morney returned, accompanied by his friend, Baron Fitzoſbourne, who was highly gratified by the cordial and reſpectful reception he met with. Every one vying with each other in their endeavours to amuſe him, he aſſumed the moſt conciliating manners, appeared pleaſed and good humoured, paid the moſt flattering attention to the young ladies, and beſtowed the warmeſt encomiums on their beauty and accompliſhments; at the ſame time admiring,

miring, or pretending to admire, the maturer graces of the mother, who had given to the world a race of women fairer than the firſt daughters of creation, and, to render the gift complete, had ſtored their minds with a fund of knowledge that could put philoſophy to the bluſh at its own ignorance.

Sir Philip aſſiduouſly courted the Baron, ſeemed to watch his looks, and to make it his whole ſtudy to oblige him,—thought as he thought, and, whatever he recommended, was ſure to approve. Lady de Morney, ſeeing her huſband ſo anxious to pleaſe, followed his example, not doubting but he had good and ſufficient reaſons for what he did. She requeſted her children ſtrictly to obſerve the ſame conduct, with which requeſt they all at firſt readily complied, and exerted themſelves to entertain their noble gueſt. Edwin was honoured with particular marks of his favour and approbation: he promiſed his beſt intereſt to obtain him promotion

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in the army, when he found that was the profeſſion for which he was deſigned.

The Baron was nearly as old as his friend Sir Philip. In fact, they had received the firſt rudiments of their education at the ſame ſchool, and under the ſame maſters; and, though their purſuits were alike, they had been thrown into very different ſituations, but ever retained a pleaſed remembrance of their boyiſh friendſhip, and took every opportunity of keeping it alive, and ſerving each other. The Baron, though large and robuſt, was neither clumſy nor forbidding in his appearance. His eyes were penetrating; he looked the warrior, and ſeemed formed to command and be obeyed. He was tall, and had an air of grandeur about him that beſpoke the man of faſhion: his voice was not unpleaſing; but he was rigid and auſtere with his ſervants and dependants; and, though upon the whole they found him a generous maſter, as he had nothing conciliating in his manner to them, they

they took every opportunity of abuſing him; for, though they durſt not venture to ſpeak before him, they made themſelves amends when they joined their companions in the kitchen, by giving ſuch traits of his character, as not only ſhocked them, but made them feel with redoubled gratitude the happy difference of their own ſituation.

Roſeline, while ſhe was compelled to treat her father's viſitor with attention and reſpect, felt an invincible diſguſt whenever he addreſſed her, and attempted to give ſpecimens of his gallantry, which was often the caſe; but, if he took hold of her hand, ſhe ſhrunk from his touch as ſhe would from that of a ſnake, and trembled, ſhe knew not why, if ſhe ſaw him looking earneſtly at her face.

Edeliza laughed at and deteſted him. She ſlily compared him with De Willows, and wondered how nature could have contrived to form two creatures ſo different from each other. Bertha wiſhed to pull off his ugly great

great wig, and to have it ſtuck upon one of the towers, obſerving, that, if his frightful face were ſeen from another, no enemy would ever come near them. How were they all ſtruck with ſorrow when they found he was to ſpend the whole ſummer at the caſtle. Roſeline, with more earneſtneſs than uſual, queſtioned her mother as to the truth of this report, but received only an evaſive anſwer, that the length of the Baron's ſtay depended on a circumſtance not yet determined.

"I ſincerely hope, my dear madam, whatever it may be, that it will at leaſt prove unfavourable to his continuance here. My father may, and I dare ſay has, juſt reaſons for eſteeming him, though no one but himſelf can diſcover them. Every one elſe diſlikes him, and I ſhall moſt truly rejoice when he takes himſelf away."

"My dear girl, (ſaid Lady de Morney,) conſider the Baron's rank, and the dignity of his character."

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"I do conſider them (ſhe replied) as the greateſt misfortunes that could happen to any one, unleſs accompanied with good humour and humility; but I think it particularly hard that other muſt ſuffer ſo many mortifications becauſe the Baron is a great man."

Again ſhe was requeſted by her mother, who could ſcarcely forbear ſmiling at the ſeriouſneſs of her manner, to recollect that men of his conſequence could not bring themſelves to act as if they were upon a level with their inferiors.

"The more is the pity, (ſaid Roſeline;) therefore, my good mother, it would be unneceſſary for me to conſider any thing about the Baron's importance, ſince he thinks ſo much and ſo highly of it himſelf: but I do not ſee, for my part, why rank and fortune ſhould tempt their poſſeſſors to aſſume ſo much on merely accidental advantages; or why people, diſtinguiſhed as their favourites, ſhould have a greater right to think and act

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as they pleaſe than thoſe leſs fortunate. We were much happier and more cheerful before he came among us, and my father more indulgent."

"Your father (ſaid Lady de Morney, with the utmoſt earneſtneſs) is, I have no doubt, perfectly ſatisfied that he is acting right, and therefore you, Roſeline, muſt be blameable in preſuming to call his conduct in queſtion. I inſiſt, as you value his and my favour, that you never again addreſs me on this ſubject; and let me adviſe you, if you wiſh to be happy, to ſhew no diſguſt to the Baron, but receive his attentions with politeneſs and good humour."

On ſaying this, ſhe withdrew, and left Roſeline, ſtruck dumb with ſurpriſe, to form what concluſions ſhe pleaſed. She knew not what to think from this unuſually ſtrange and unpleaſant converſation, and could not comprehend either her father's or mother's reaſons for being ſo much attached to any one, whatever might be his rank,

ranks, who was ſo little formed to excite any feelings but thoſe of diſguſt in the minds of thoſe unfortunate people with whom he condeſcended to aſſociate. She ſaw and lamented that, ſince the Baron's arrival, neither De Clavering, De Willows, nor Hugh Camelford, came without a formal invitation from her father, while the reſerve which prevailed in their parties baniſhed all that enlivening converſation that once rendered them ſo pleaſant. Her ſiſters too, the dear Edeliza, and the ſweet Bertha, were kept under ſo much reſtraint before this great perſonage, they ſeemed almoſt afraid to ſpeak.

Roſeline, to ſhake off for a time theſe uncomfortable reflections, ſtole into the priſoner's room, in which ſhe ſeldom failed to find her brother: there ſhe loſt all remembrance of the Baron; and, in converſing with friends ſo dear to her heart, progreſſively recovered that native cheerfulneſs which was one of the moſt engaging features of her character.—

The ſonnets, which her brother had ſo recently given her, not only ſerved to raiſe her ſpirits, but had made an indelible impreſſion on her mind. She ſmiled with ſomething more than even her uſual complacency on this love-taught poet. Of his tenderneſs and ſincerity ſhe could cheriſh no doubt. His honour and worth it was equally impoſſible to ſuſpect. No one knew them better,—no one eſtimated them ſo highly as herſelf. To ſuppoſe he could be leſs amiable, leſs deſerving of her attachment, would have appeared to her a crime of the moſt enormous magnitude. Thus did the fond effuſions of love throw a veil over the eyes of their artleſs votary, in order to give a fair colouring, and to reconcile her to a conduct which, in another, her prudence would have taught her to condemn; but thus it is with too many erring mortals: when once they become the hood-winked ſlaves of any predominant paſſion, they are not only regardleſs of the world's opinion, but inſenſible to the ſecret admonitions of that ſilent monitor,

which

which they carry in their boſom. Roſeline at firſt acted merely from the generous impulſe of pity and univerſal benevolence; but, in ſo doing, ſhe admitted a gueſt to diſpute with them a place in her breaſt, which neither time, reaſon, nor prudence, could baniſh thence.

Our artleſs heroine was unfortunately the darling child of ſenſibility, and her mind ſo ſuſceptible of the miſeries and misfortunes of others, that, from the moment ſhe diſcovered them, they became her own. What then muſt be the poignancy of her feelings, when ſhe reflected on the dependent, helpleſs, and unprovided ſtate of a lover, dearer to her than life!—who dared not diſcloſe even his name,—whoſe blameleſs conduct proved to her partial judgment that he ſuffered unjuſtly, and whoſe virtues could alone reconcile her to herſelf for having riſked ſo much on his account, and entruſted her heart to the keeping of one whoſe ſituation precluded hope,—who had declared he be-

longed to no one,—a priſoner, a ſtranger, without fortune or friends: yet, think as ſhe would, theſe cruel circumſtances, after the ſtricteſt inveſtigation, acted as a taliſman in favour of her lover.

The life, which ſhe fancied, under Providence, ſhe had been the humble means of preſerving, ſhe concluded it was now her duty to render happy; therefore, to deprive it of its value, by affecting an indifference ſhe did not feel, was as far from her power as her inclination; yet there were moments when ſhe recollected, with the ſevereſt anguiſh, how much her brother, as well as herſelf, was acting in oppoſition to the deſigns and will of her parents. To deceive ſuch parents was a thought which, in her moſt impaſſioned moments, ſhe could not dwell upon, but love and ſenſibility had woven their webs ſo cloſe around her heart, that ſhe ſtruggled in vain to diſentangle herſelf from the bewitching ſnare.

Senſibility

Senſibility I have long thought, nine times out of ten, proves a ſource of miſery to the generous and benevolent, and as often is merely the boaſt of the ignorant, who pretend to be overſtocked with the milk of human kindneſs, and whoſe feelings are equally excited by the death of a huſband or a lap-dog. I am ſatisfied there is no bleſſing more earneſtly to be wiſhed for than a calm and compoſed reſignation to the events of this life, and all its complicated concerns.—It appears rather an Iriſhiſm, that to be happy we muſt become indifferent,—but ſo it is.

Real ſenſibility is of all burthens the heavieſt to bear. Long experience and careful obſervation have convinced me too painfully of this truth. A thouſand and a thouſand times I have ſhed torrents of tears, and felt the moſt tormenting anxiety for thoſe who would have ſeen me with the moſt ſtoical apathy begging through the ſtreets for bread. The pleaſures attending high-raiſed

ſenſibility are ſo much over-balanced by the painful effects they produce, that I proteſt I had rather be an oak, or a cabbage, than alive to ſuch ever-varying and corroſive feelings, which act upon the human mind as ſlow poiſon would upon the body.

When Roſeline was going to bed, the ſervant who attended her, and who, from having lived ſome years in the family, was indulged in the habit of converſing familiarly with the young ladies, determined to get rid of a kind of confidential ſecret, which had been entruſted to her by one of her fellow-ſervants.

"Laws, Miſs Roſeline, (ſaid ſhe,) what think you that frightful old Baron comed here for?—As I live I ſhould not have dreamed of any thing ſo ludicurſt!"—

"Came for? (replied Roſeline,)—why he came to ſee my father to be ſure;—what elſe could be his inducement for viſiting this ſtupid place?"

"Ha,

" Ha, ha! I thought I ſhould poze you, miſs, (cried Audrey, drawing herſelf up, and giggling at her own conſequence,)—why, as ſure as you be borned and chriſtened, he comed here to pick up a wife, if he can meet with one to pleaſe his own ſuperannuated meagrims; and his man, Pedro, thinks as how a perſon I could name would ſuit him to a tee, but I thinks otherwiſe.—Such an old frumpiſh piece of crazy furniture, ſays I, will not ſuit any of the ladies that belongs to the noble genitors of Bungay Caſtle and its henvirons. 'You may be miſtaken, dame, ſaid the ſaucy fellow;—if they ſuit my maſter, my maſter may ſuit them ſure, for he is as rich,— as rich as Craſus."

" For heaven's ſake, (ſaid Roſeline,) what nonſenſe have you picked up? You muſt not preſume, Audrey, to ſpeak of the Baron in ſo diſreſpectful a manner. If my father and mother heard you, I am not ſure that you would be permitted to ſtay another night in the caſtle."

"It would be a good ſtory, indeed, (reſumed the talkative Abigail,) to turn away a ſervant for ſuch an offence! As I have a ſoul, which, by the goodneſs of father Anſelm, I hope to get ſaved, my heart bleeds for you, miſs, and I could claw out his ugly, ſtaring eyes for to go for to think that you, who be ſo ſweet tempered, and kind, and affabel, to your unfeerors, ſhould have to nurſe his crazy old carcaſe.—'Tis vexing to——"

Roſeline had ſtarted up in her bed as ſoon as ſhe found herſelf ſo ſtrangely introduced with the Baron, and ſeeing that Audrey had taken up the candle in order to leave the room, gently called her back, and begged ſome explanation of what ſhe had heard, which ſhe declared herſelf unable to comprehend.

"Mayhap you are;—ſo much the better, (ſaid Audrey.)—Leſs ſaid is ſooneſt mended, as I have gone to the end of my line;—I may be turned away if I aſſume to ſpeak of the

the beautiful old Baron ;— things will all come out in time ;—I can be ſpectful to my betters :—they that like an old huſband let them have him ;—'tis no bread and butter of mine.—Good night, miſs ;— the Baron is a fine old Gracian, andwill make his lady marvelly happy."

Saying this, ſhe left the room, and Roſeline was too much diſpleaſed to call her back a ſecond time, but determined to queſtion her ſtill farther the firſt opportunity. " The Baron came to the caſtle for a wife!"—It was too ridiculous to be believed; but, if he did, he could not poſſibly think of uniting himſelf with her! Servants were ever prying into the ſecrets of their betters, or forming ſuch ſtories as only very ignorant people could think of inventing.

She now went to ſleep, forgot the Baron, and dreamed of the priſoner, whom her fancy repreſented as being releaſed from confinement, and eager, with the conſent of Sir

Philip, to lead her in triumph to the altar of Hymen. To the deluſive excurſions of the ſoul we will for the preſent conſign her; but, before we take leave of the inhabitants of the caſtle for the night, we will juſt take a peep into the kitchen, where, around a blazing fire, ſpread on a hearth four yards wide, were ſeated ſeveral of the domeſtics, earneſtly engaged in talking over the affairs of the family, each of them drawing the character of their maſter or miſtreſs, as the humour of the moment dictated, and giving their opinions of actions, the motives of which they knew ſo little, that they were juſt as able to pronounce ſentence on them as a judge without a fair and candid examination.

Sir Philip, it was ſaid, was become quite proud and penurious,—the young ladies troubleſome,—and Lady De Morney croſs, whimſical, and ſuſpicious. Suddenly the door burſt open, and a young man, who had been for ſome time an aſſiſtant in the ſtables, tumbled

tumbled into the kitchen, and, with terror depicted on his countenance, exclaimed, "I ſaw it,—I ſaw it!—I ſaw the light with my own eyes!—The ghoſt followed me up to the door, and then vaniſhed in a flaſh of fire!—Shut the door, or it may get in!"

This in a moment alarmed the whole ſet; they all crowded round the terrified man, and with one voice eagerly inquired what ghoſt, what lights he meant? and when and where he had ſeen them? After drinking a copious draught of ale, he became able to ſatisfy the curioſity he had excited, and told them, as he was coming from the ſtables, juſt as he paſſed the gate of the inner ballium, and was within forty yards of the South tower, he ſaw a light as plain as ever he had ſeen one in his life, through one of the grated windows, and, after it had diſappeared a few ſeconds, it appeared again at a much lower window, flaſhed upon the wall, and ſmelt like ſulphur. At the moment it vaniſhed the ſecond time, he ſaw ſomething

all in white, which he thought glided paſt him, but, on looking behind him, it was there alſo, and it had actually followed him till he fell into the kitchen.

"Then, as ſure as we are alive, (ſaid one of the grooms,) Thomas has ſeen the ghoſt of the lady who died for love of the young officer that was put to death in the dungeons. I have heard my grandfather ſay a thouſand times he muſt have died innocent, for he was as bold as a lion till his laſt gaſp."

"Well, (ſaid one of the women-ſervants,) I ſhall be afraid to ſtir out after dark, if theſe confounded ghoſts are again found taking their nightly rambles, and prying into every thing that is going forwards."

"I always knew (ſaid another) this caſtle was diſturbed ever ſince the great clock ſtruck twelve twice in one night; for what on earth could touch it at that time, if it had not been a ſpirit?"

"Ah! (ſaid a third,) no doubt there have been ſad doings in the caſtle."

"Not ſince we came to it, (replied an old grey-headed footman.) My maſter has practiſed no deeds of darkneſs that would bring the dead from their graves. As to what was done before our time, that can be no buſineſs of ours, and I don't ſee how any ghoſt can have a right to frighten and interrupt, either by day or night, thoſe who were never acquainted with it."

"Chriſt Jeſus preſerve us! (cried one of the maids,) I verily thinks I ſaw ſomething glide paſt that door! Surely father Anſelm ſhould be ſent for to give them abſolution.—There! did you not hear that ruſtling?"

"I ſee and hear nothing, (ſaid the before mentioned old ſervant,) but what I wiſh neither to ſee nor hear. You are all a parcel of ſuperſtitious ignorant fools, and, if my maſter ſhould once find out what cowards you all are, he would ſoon compel you to give place to a bolder ſet. Come, come, let

us

us go to bed, and leave the ghoſts to do the ſame."

The old man led the way with a candle in his hand; the reſt followed, clinging to each other like a flight of bees, not one of them daring to be left behind; and the groom, who had really ſeen a light from the tower inhabited by the priſoner, was ſo convinced he had ſeen a ghoſt, that neither father Anſelm, nor all the fathers in Chriſtendom, could have perſuaded him to think the contrary; and ſo much had it alarmed him, that his terrified imagination had miſtaken his own ſhadow for the ghoſt following cloſe at his heels, and it was with ſome difficulty he could be prevailed upon by his fellow-ſervants to go to bed, leſt he ſhould ſee it again.

The next morning, when Audrey went to call her young lady, Roſeline requeſted ſhe would forgive her for having ſpoken ſo angrily the preceding evening, and with the moſt winning ſoftneſs begged to be informed

what

what ſhe meant by coupling her name with that of the Baron.

Audrey, who had never before ſeen Roſeline ſo much out of humour, and had neither forgotten nor forgiven the affront of being prevented from diſcloſing a ſecret which ſhe had for ſeveral days found very troubleſome to keep, replied, "I couples no one; matches are made in heaven, or in the church, or at wakes; but I think, for my part, ſome are made in a much worſer place, and ſo ſhe will think too who is tacked in hollybands with the old Baron." "But who do you think, my good Audrey, will ever be ſo unfortunate?" "Why will you ax me, miſs? I muſt not ſpeak my ſenterments: we poor ſervants never knows nothing; but this I do know for certain, if ever I marries, it ſhall be to a young man, a pretty-looking man,—good humoured ones I loves,—ſomething like Mr. Camelfor;—not to an old crab, ſowrer than vinegar,

gar, who would not ſuffer me to ſee with my own dear eyes, nor believe with my own natural ſenſes,—a crotched faced toad, who would ſhut me up for life, mayhap, if I liked a better or a younger man than himſelf,—an accident I think that might happen."

"But how ſhould the Baron find out what you thought?"

"By going to a negromancer. Such old cattle are to the full as cunning as their black maſter, and might ſtrike one dumb."

"That, to be ſure, (replied Roſeline,) would be a heavy misfortune to thoſe who were fond of hearing the ſound of their own voice in preference to that of any other perſon."

"For my part, (ſaid Audrey,) voice or no voice, I verily thinks ſomething mendufly bad after all will happen to this crazy caſtle, for Thomas laſt night ſaw lights in the South tower, and the ghoſt of a young woman followed him in ſuch a hurry, that, if he had not ran as faſt as a hound, it would have

have ſtamped upon his heels. It went away like a ſky-rocket, and the ſmell of ſulphur almoſt *ſifficated* the poor fellow, who will certainly have a *parletic* ſtroke."

Lady de Morney's bell now ringing, Audrey left the room, without having ſaid half ſo much as ſhe intended to do about the ghoſt, or unburthening her mind of a ſecret ſhe heartily wiſhed to reveal.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

WHEN the family met at breakfaſt, the Baron appeared unuſually affable, and Sir Philip in high ſpirits. A walk was propoſed to take a view of the town, nunnery, and environs of the caſtle. Roſeline and her ſiſters were requeſted to be of the party, and they were very ſoon joined by De Clavering, De Willows, and Hugh Camelford. This little promenade was ſo pleaſant, that it ſeemed to harmonize every mind, and to produce a redoubled and grateful reliſh for the early beauties of the infant ſpring.

" Already

" Already now the ſnow-drop dar'd appear,
" The firſt pale bloſſom of th'unripen'd year,
" As Flora's breath, by ſome transforming pow'r,
" Had chang'd an icicle into a flow'r.
" Its name and hue the ſcentleſs plant retains,
" And Winter lingers in its icy veins."

The Baron, who had politely offered the aſſiſtance of his arm to Roſeline, (which her father bade her accept,) whiſpered ſome very fine things in her ear in praiſe of her ſhape, beauty, and underſtanding, — told her it was a reproach on the taſte and judgment of his ſex that ſo charming a female had not put on hymeneal fetters;—it was a poſitive proof of the blindneſs of the god of love.

" Surely you forget, my lord, (replied the bluſhing Roſeline,) that I have ſcarcely left off my leading ſtrings, and am but juſt liberated from the confinement of the ſchool."

Age, he told her, ought not to be reckoned by the number of years, but by accompliſhments and good qualities.

" That

"That kind of calculation (ſaid De Clavering) would make your age, Miſs de Morney, more upon a par with the Baron's."

"More upon a par, you mean, (added De Willows,) with our firſt parent Adam."

"What of Atam? (cried Hugh Camelford, ſkipping to the ſide of Roſeline, and eagerly handing her over a little run of water they were obliged to croſs,)— what were you ſaying about our crate crandfather Atam? I have often wiſhed to ſee the old poy, and trink a pottle of pure water with him from the pond in the carten of Eden."

"Why ſo, ſir?" ſaid the ſtately and mortified Baron, who felt and ſeemed to ſhrink from the contraſt between the active and lively gallantry of the giddy Cambrian and the ſlow and cautious efforts of his own.

"Why?—why? pecauſe he muſt be a prave fellow to venture matrimony with the firſt woman he ſaw."

"How

"How the devil ſhould he do otherwiſe than take the firſt, when there was no other to chooſe!" ſaid De Clavering.

"The tevil however was even with him after all, (replied the unthinking Camelford;)—the old poy had petter have peen quiet."

"I do not ſee that, (ſaid De Willows;) and, as the miſchief was productive of ſome good, ſurely we have no right to criticiſe with ſeverity that conduct which was forgiven by a Being ſo much more perfect than the creature he had created."

"That is as much as to ſay, (rejoined Camelford,) that, when we chooſe to play the fool, cofet our neighbour's wife or taughter, we have only to plame our own imperfect nature, repent, and be forcifen."

"That would be to truſt our hopes of forgiveneſs upon a very ſandy foundation indeed, (ſaid Sir Philip,) as determined guilt, or a continuance in error, can have but little chance of immortal happineſs."

"And

" And for our mortal ſhare of that ſame commodity, (replied the lively Hugh,) we muſt not truſt to matrimony, I fear, as I never heard married people found their happineſs puilt upon a rock."

This ſpeech produced a general laugh, but Sir Philip, who was by no means pleaſed with the ſubject, ſaid with a ſmile to the Baron, " Theſe young men think they know more than their forefathers."

" By which means, (replied he,) they will moſt aſſuredly entail upon themſelves the mortification of knowing leſs."

The converſation, during the reſt of the walk, was confined to ſuch objects as occaſionally preſented themſelves to obſervation. The inhabitants of the town came to their doors to catch a look at the party from the caſtle. To as many as were known by the governor he ſpoke familiarly, as did the other gentlemen, and they concluded the Baron muſt be ſome very great man, perhaps the

king himſelf in diſguiſe, becauſe he did not once condeſcend to addreſs them.

Roſeline chatted with ſome young girls who came out to make their beſt curteſies, while the Baron thought all theſe attentions paid to ſuch plebeian ſouls wonderfully troubleſome. At dinner he ſcarcely ſpoke five words, and De Willows was ſo diſguſted with his forbidding haughtineſs, that the next day he preſented to De Clavering the following ſatire on pride, ſaying it was a tribute juſtly due to the Baron for his ſupreme excellency in the diſplay of that deteſtable feature in his character.

Hell's firſt born exhalation ſure is pride!
Who, with its ſiſter, envy, would divide
The various bleſſings to poor mortals given,
By the kind bounty of indulgent heaven.
What at the laſt have kings to make them proud!
A gilded coffin and a ſatin ſhroud.
The lordly worm on theſe will quickly prey;
For worms, like kings, in turn will have their day.

What

What then is man who boaſts his form and make?
A reptile's meal,—a worm's high-flavour'd ſteak.
The epicure, who caters like a ſlave,
Is but a pamper'd morſel for the grave.

Envy's a canker of ſuch ſubtle power,
It ſteals all pleaſure from the gayeſt hour.
It is the deadly nightſhade of the mind;
With ſecret poiſon all its arts refin'd;
And, when attended by its vile relation,
Would ſpread a plague deſtructive to a nation.
Then ſend theſe hags back to their native hell,
With fiends and evil ſpirits formed to dwell.

No more on worth let man look down with ſcorn,
And frown on thoſe not quite ſo highly born;
Nor, as the coaches rattle from his door,
Boaſt, like proud Haman, of not being poor!
Earth's doom'd to earth, all folly there muſt end,—
Then read, and own the ſatiriſt a friend.

Madeline had been invited, and obtained permiſſion of the abbeſs to ſpend the following day at the caſtle. This gave additional vivacity to the lively ſpirits of Edwin, who, with

with his ſiſter, ſpent as much time with the priſoner as they could ſteal, without exciting curioſity or ſuſpicion. Roſeline gave them with ſome humour the ghoſt-ſtory, as imparted to her by Audrey, and cautioned Albert againſt having any lights ſeen from the windows, leſt it ſhould be productive of ſuch inquiries as might lead to a diſcovery of the rooms being inhabited; but, notwithſtanding all her attempts to fly from herſelf, and conceal from the obſerving eye of love her own internal conflicts, ſhe was almoſt tempted to throw aſide the maſk, and at once confeſs all her apprehenſions.

How were theſe apprehenſions heightened, when, in the afternoon, her father told her in a whiſper he wiſhed to ſee her in his ſtudy before the family aſſembled at breakfaſt, having ſome intelligence of the moſt agreeable nature to impart, which he hoped and believed would make her one of the happieſt, as it could not fail to render her one of the moſt envied, of her ſex.

Roſeline trembled, turned pale, and took the earlieſt opportunity of withdrawing, not daring to truſt Edwin with her fears, or riſk ſeeing the priſoner for ſome hours, leſt her agitation ſhould betray ſuſpicions of ſhe knew not what, but in which her terrified imagination confirmed all the hints her maid had given her.—Marry the Baron !—it was a thought ſo unnatural, ſo repugnant to every wiſh, every feeling of her heart,—ſo inimical to the ideas ſhe had formed of happineſs, that it was not to be endured.—She wept, wrung her hands, recollected herſelf, and again ſunk into deſpondency; but at all events reſolved to acquire reſolution to go through the interview with her father, and give him ſuch anſwers as ſhould convince him an union with his friend (if ſuch was the painful ſubject he had to communicate) would make her the verieſt wretch on earth. Her heart was no longer in her own poſſeſſion, but that ſhe muſt not dare to avow; all therefore that ſhe could determine was, to

refuſe the Baron, and to love the priſoner, and him only, to the end of her life.

Theſe important points ſettled for the preſent, gave to her perturbed ſpirits momentary relief, and enabled her to join the family without creating any ſuſpicion that they were unuſually depreſſed; when, however, ſhe followed her brother into the priſoner's room, it was with the utmoſt difficulty ſhe maintained any command over her feelings; but, unwilling to alarm or diſtreſs her unfortunate lover, till neceſſity compelled her to acquaint him with her ſorrows, the only difference her painful ſtruggles produced was an addition of gentle tenderneſs to her manner; and, though ſhe had often thought her affection could admit of no increaſe, yet, at this moment, he was, if poſſible, ſtill more beloved, ſtill more endeared by the ten thouſand uncommon ties which had ſo wonderfully tended to unite hearts that appeared to be under the directing will of Providence. The next morning, pre-

previouſly to ſeeing her father, Roſeline once more ventured to queſtion Audrey, and ſo earneſtly begged ſhe would explain all ſhe meant by the hints ſhe had given reſpecting the Baron, that poor Audrey, ſoftened almoſt to tears by ſeeing her young lady really diſtreſſed, no longer remembered her former petulance, but readily complied with her requeſt, though, in fact, all ſhe knew amounted to little more than ſhe had already told ;—namely, that the Baron came to look for a wife to carry home, and ſhut up in his old caſtle ;—that the Baron's ſervant had informed her he was in love with her young lady ;—that Sir Philip liked him for a ſon-in-law, and they were ſoon to be married :—" But, Chriſt Jeſus, miſs ! he is ſuch an infamy man, he would no more mind ordering one of his vaſſals to be thrown into a fiery furnace than my maſter would killing a pig ; and Pedro ſays, he ought to have been put into the ſpettacle court fifty and fifty times, for his entregens and fornications ; for, before his firſt wife died——"

" What

"What then? (exclaimed Roſeline,) has the Baron been married more than once?"

"Bleſs your heart, miſs, he has killed two wives already, and the Lord in his mercy ſhorten his days, that a third may never fall into the clutches of ſuch a manufactor!—Miſs, I would not fortify my word even to gain a gentleman for a huſband; and, as I have a Chriſtian ſoul, which I hope father Anſelm will keep out of purgatory, I have told the truth, and only the truth; you muſt demonſtrate with your father, but don't go for to get me turned out of my place for wiſhing to preſerve you from being led to the haltar by ſuch an old imperial taſk-maſter."

Roſeline, too much alarmed to be as uſual amuſed with the ſingular oratory of her ſimple but well-meaning attendant, thanked her for her good wiſhes, and promiſed never to mention the information ſhe had communicated.

"Well, then, bleſs your ſweet face! I'll be crucified but I'll municate to you all I can pick up. Pedro is marvelly keen and clever, yet he appears as innocent as the babe unborn, and for all he gets pretty gleanings and pickings out of his old maſter, he hates him as heartily as I hates faſt-days and confeſſions; for you ſee, miſs, one does not like to tell tales of oneſelf, and, in my opinion, ſome of our monks and father confeſſors don't find in their hearts any ejection to us pretty girls."

Roſeline, having diſmiſſed her loquacious attendant, endeavoured to acquire ſufficient fortitude to meet her father with compoſure, and to arm herſelf with reſolution to withſtand any attempts he might make to compel her into meaſures from which every feeling of her heart recoiled. She too well knew the warmth and obſtinacy of her father's temper, when he met with oppoſition in a favourite plan, not to dread the conteſt. She now concluded, from many preceding circumſtances,

circumſtances, that the Baron was brought to the caſtle for the horrid purpoſe of becoming her huſband, and unfortunately at this moment recollected with redoubled tenderneſs the very great difference between him and the man whom, by a chain of the moſt ſingular and intereſting circumſtances, ſhe had been led to regard with a degree of affection ſhe ſcarcely dared to inveſtigate, and of which ſhe knew not the full force. Her brother, her dear Edwin, too, had formed an attachment equally repugnant to the will and ambition of his father. The painful recollection awakened her warmeſt ſympathy, and increaſed her own ſorrows.

" Ah! (ſhe exclaimed,) how darkly overclouded is the proſpect which a few months back ſeemed ſo bright! Well, let the tempeſt come, let the thunder burſt on my defenceleſs head, I will——"

Here ſhe was interrupted by a ſummons to attend her father, which ſhe inſtantly aroſe

to obey; but her trembling limbs were ſcarcely able to ſupport her, and ſhe was obliged to reſt ſeveral times before ſhe could ſufficiently recover herſelf to appear in his preſence, without diſcovering the long and ſevere conflicts ſhe had vainly endeavoured to conquer.

Sir Philip, on her entering the room, eagerly aroſe to meet her, and either did not, or, what is more probable, would not ſeem to notice her confuſion. He tenderly took her hand, and led her to a chair; then, ſeating himſelf by her, obſerved with a ſmile, that he doubted not her curioſity had been excited, and told her he would have a kiſs before he would diſcloſe the ſecret; "for the buſineſs (he continued) which I have to negotiate with my ſweet girl demands ſecreſy."

Roſeline, afraid of truſting her voice, bowed in ſilence, but her manner ſhewed ſhe was all attention.

"My

"My dear girl, (ſaid Sir Philip,) why all this apparent tremor? I hope you are, and ever have been convinced that my firſt, my moſt anxious wiſhes are to ſee my children happy."—

(Then, thought Roſeline, you will not ſurely ſo much miſtake the road to happineſs as to propoſe your friend to me for a huſband.)

"Baron Fitzoſbourne has ſolicited me to intercede with you in his behalf. Notwithſtanding the greatneſs of his pretenſions, he has even condeſcended to entreat I would intercede with my dear Roſeline, that ſhe will in due time permit him to lead her to the altar."

Roſeline, extremely agitated, made an attempt to ſpeak, which Sir Philip obſerving, ſaid, "Attend to me a few moments longer, my dear; I will then give you leave to expreſs your joyful ſurpriſe at the good fortune which awaits you.—My noble friend, from

the very firſt moment of ſeeing you, loved, and wiſhed to make you his own: he, like a man of honour, inquired if your heart was diſengaged; I aſſured him it was, for I knew you too well, my dear girl, to ſuppoſe you would ever diſpoſe of it without a father's ſanction. Eager to poſſeſs a treaſure which had never ſtrayed from its own ſpotleſs manſion, he then requeſted my permiſſion to become a candidate for your favour. I readily and freely gave it, and encouraged him to hope he would meet neither with caprice nor oppoſition; at the ſame time I candidly told him, that, though my fortune was upon the whole conſiderable, yet, as my family was large and ſtill might increaſe, my daughter's portions could be but ſmall, —ſo very ſmall, that I feared it would prove an impediment to your union. He generouſly overlooked this objection, and wiſhes only to gain your heart and hand; while the ſhare you would be entitled to have of your father's property he requeſts may be given among the reſt of my family, and

and he will make an equal ſettlement upon you, as if you brought him a large fortune. Indeed, ſo noble and diſintereſted were his propoſals, that they both gratified and aſtoniſhed me: they are ſuch as no parent could receive with indifference,—no young woman refuſe. The Baron has not only a princely fortune, but a princely ſpirit, and ſuch unbounded intereſt, that my Roſeline will not only ſecure rank and ſplendor to herſelf, but will prove the fortunate means of obtaining them for her brothers and ſiſters, and of making the laſt cloſing ſcenes of her parents' days happier and freer from care than they have ever been."

Ah! thought Roſeline, and her own irretrievably wretched; for, among all the treaſures to be purchaſed by this unnatural union, happineſs is not included. She ſighed deeply, and, without looking up, remained ſilent.

Sir Philip, rather alarmed at the alteration in her countenance, which changed

from being extremely flushed to the most deadly paleness; and, observing a tear stealing down her cheeks, still appeared determined to think he should find no difficulty in over-ruling any little objection she might venture to make. He put one hand into her's, and the other round her waist, and again addressing her, said, "He did not wonder that an offer so splendid and noble should affect and overpower a spirit humble and unassuming as her's. I always knew the inestimable value of the Baron's friendship, and am equally sensible of the rich prize I possess in a daughter; but I never dared to cherish the grateful hope that I should live to see two persons on whom I depended for so large a portion of my happiness united, or that a child of De Morney's was to repay the noble Baron for his generosity to her father."

"For heaven's sake! my dear dear father, (cried the almost fainting Roseline,) do not thus seem to misunderstand the nature

of

of feelings entitled to your tendereſt pity.—I never, never can love the Baron!"

Sir Philip haſtily aroſe; fury flaſhed from his eyes; every feature was beginning to be convulſed with paſſion, but he ſtruggled againſt the rage he wiſhed to ſubdue, while ſhe continued,—"Conſider my extreme youth; contraſt it with the age of your friend;—can I be a fit or eligible wife for a man older than my father?—Without feeling any affection on my part, would it be juſt or right to give him my hand?—Would not that be to puniſh moſt ſeverely the man for whom you profeſs a friendſhip, whom you call both generous and noble; but for whom, ſo far from loving, I have ever felt an invincible diſlike, which ſometimes I have thought, if he ſtayed much longer at the caſtle, would increaſe to averſion."

Sir Philip, who had neither expected to meet nor was prepared to encounter an oppoſition

tion ſo determined, was no longer able to keep his paſſion within bounds.

"Roſeline, (cried he, ſtriking his clenched fiſt on the table, and looking with the wildneſs of a maniac,) dare not preſume to cheriſh, or to avow, a diſlike which will not only plunge a dagger in your mother's heart, but rob you of a father. What buſineſs can a girl of your age have to like or diſlike but as your parents ſhall direct? — Give them up for ever, or accept the Baron!— How will you reconcile yourſelf to become an alien to your family?—how reliſh ſpending your days in a nunnery, inſtead of enjoying liberty and every pleaſure in the gay ſunſhine of a court, glittering with diamonds, ſurrounded by admirers, equal in rank and ſuperior in fortune to many of our moſt ancient nobility?—Conſider well before you determine. To enable you to conquer your diffidence, or caprice, one month I will give you;—one month I will allow to the ſtruggles of maiden baſhfulneſs,

or

or the wayward humour of your ſex. Yet hear at once my final reſolution. If, during that period, you either alarm or diſguſt the Baron by your folly or ignorance, ſo as to make him repent the noble overtures he has made to ſecure an alliance with my family,—or if you attempt to damp the ardour of his paſſion by your coldneſs,—if at the end of that period you do not, without any viſible reluctance, accept him as a lover, and promiſe to give him your hand, I will inſtantly ſend you into a convent of the ſevereſt order, and compel you to take the veil."

Roſeline, overpowered by his manner, fell on the floor in a ſtate of inſenſibility.—Her father now ſaw he had gone too far; he was alarmed; but, much as he felt himſelf diſtreſſed, he too well knew what he was about, to call for aſſiſtance; he therefore, by the uſual methods, endeavoured to recover her as well as he could, and, as ſoon as he ſaw her revive, ſoothed her hurried ſpirits with

with every fond attention, addreſſed her by the tendereſt appellations, and begged her to have pity on him and on herſelf.

Roſeline, too much terrified to contend farther at that time, heard him with ſilent deſpondency, and hoped the cruel conteſt would be ended by her death; for, as ſhe never before had fainted, ſhe imagined it was a prelude to her diſſolution. Sir Philip, to reconcile her, if poſſible, to his ambitious views, argued the matter with that ſophiſtry and art which in all ages have been practiſed with too much ſucceſs; aſſured her of every flattering indulgence that a youthful heart could deſire,—painted her future proſpects in colours moſt likely to captivate the attention and enſnare the ſenſes; and even went ſo far as to promiſe, till the end of the month, he would not mention the Baron's name to her again, but inſiſted on her receiving his attentions with complacency, and deſired her not to make a confidant of any one in a matter of ſo much

much importance: he likewiſe informed her, he had forbidden her mother's talking to her on the ſubject, and concluded this painful interview with telling her, he truſted her gentleneſs, duty, and affection, would determine her to oblige and gratify her anxious and tender father in the firſt and moſt prevailing wiſhes of his heart. He recommended her to retire to her own room, and promiſed to find a proper excuſe for her abſence. After leading her to the door of his apartment, he embraced and left her.

Sir Philip de Morney, though in many reſpects a kind father and a good huſband, was proud and aſpiring. Theſe paſſions, as he advanced in years, gained additional aſcendancy over his mind, and as he ſaw his children approaching that period when it became neceſſary to think of an eſtabliſhment for them, he was more and more anxious to ſee them placed among the great.

His lady, equally attached to the faſcinating influence of birth and ſplendor, had neither

neither inclination nor power to counteract his deſigns, nor to diſpute with him on a point to which her own wiſhes tended. She was too partial, too fond of her children not to think they were calculated to ſhine in the moſt exalted ſituations, and that they deſerved every bleſſing, every indulgence which rank or fortune could beſtow. She had married a man much older than herſelf, and was happy; therefore ſhe ſaw no reaſonable objection in the difference of age between her daughter and the Baron, whoſe birth carried an irreſiſtible paſſport to her heart.

Sir Philip had talked the matter over with her, and, with that prevailing influence he had ever retained, brought her not only to conſent to any meaſures he ſhould find neceſſary to adopt in order to carry his point, but obtained a ſolemn promiſe from her to conceal from Edwin, and every one elſe, the ſanguine hopes they entertained for the ſplendid eſtabliſhment of their daughter.—

The

The fact was, Sir Philip had at different periods of his life received many favours, and ſome of a pecuniary nature, from the Baron, which had never been ſettled, and had it not been for the aſſiſtance of the Baron's purſe, he muſt have deeply mortgaged his eſtates to carry on the law-ſuit, which, without the intereſt of his friend, would at laſt have terminated againſt him. It was in conſequence of their unexpected meeting in town that he prevailed upon him, with ſome difficulty, to return with him to the caſtle.

What enſued was ſo much beyond the moſt flattering expectations he had ever dared to cheriſh, that the feelings of the parent were ſacrificed to ambition, and he inſtantly determined to carry his point, let the conſequence be what it would; and, though he had obſerved, in the whole of Roſeline's behaviour to his friend, convincing proofs of that diſlike which ſhe had in

in her interview with him avowed, yet he did not deſpair of gaining his purpoſe: he was aware that he might find ſome little oppoſition to his wiſhes, and therefore, to guard as cautiouſly as poſſible againſt diſappointments, he had more than once repreſented to the Baron the youth, inexperience, and extreme timidity, of his daughter, and the terror ſhe would feel at being ſeparated from a mother from whom ſhe had never been abſent.

By ſuch wary precautions as theſe he had prevailed upon his friend to poſtpone making any propoſals to Roſeline, till he had paved the way for a welcome reception. To ſuch a plan a lover could not make any reaſonable objection, particularly one who wiſhed to have as little trouble as poſſible in the gratification of his deſires.—Too proud, haughty, and faſtidious, to pay his court, or make any ſacrifice to the wayward humours of a young beauty, he ſecretly rejoiced that her father would take the

the whole upon himſelf; and, knowing how agreeable the offered alliance was to him, he had no fears but as ſoon as the young lady's conſent was aſked, ſhe would be happy to comply; he therefore looked forwards with leſs impatience than he would have done, had any doubts reſted upon his mind.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

NO ſooner had Roſeline reached her own apartment, and faſtened the door, than ſhe ſunk on her knees, and having for ſome minutes given way to the ſeverity of her feelings by tears and lamentations, ſhe recovered ſufficient reſolution to ſupplicate her Maker to ſupport and direct her in this trying hour of diſtreſs. By degrees ſhe became more compoſed, and ſat down to reflect on her ſituation with leſs agitation and terror. Her father had promiſed her, and ſhe knew his promiſe would be held ſacred, that ſhe ſhould

ſhould be indulged with one whole month to determine whether ſhe would or would not accept the Baron: ſhe was already determined, but ſhe would avail herſelf of the few weeks allowed her to ſtruggle with her feelings, and preſerve the peace and tranquillity of her family; beſides, it was placing the dreaded evil at ſome diſtance, and that to one ſo wretched was obtaining a great deal. After the month was expired, (but to that dreadful moment ſhe had not yet acquired fortitude to look,) ſhe ſhould ſtill perſiſt in her reſolution; till then ſhe would oblige her father all ſhe could by quietly receiving the Baron's attentions; but ſhe was reſolved not to deceive him by appearing to receive them with pleaſure.

Madeline came to ſpend the day as had been propoſed. Edwin found many opportunities of renewing his vows, and of making ſome tender reproaches for her not ſeeing him ſo often as he wiſhed by the ſubterranean paſſage, for which ſhe aſſigned

ſuch prudent reaſons, as ſerved in ſome degree to quiet his apprehenſions, which, however, were rather increaſed than abated by obſerving the marked and particular attention which was paid her by De Willows, who, it was but too viſible, cheriſhed a growing paſſion in his boſom, which equally tortured Edeliza, Edwin, Madeline, and himſelf. Roſeline generouſly determined not to interrupt the few hours of happineſs and tranquillity which her friends ſeemed to enjoy, by giving them the moſt diſtant hint of her own internal miſery.

They took an opportunity of viſiting the priſoner. Madeline was received by him with the cordial affection of a brother, for ſhe was the adopted ſiſter of his beloved Roſeline,—the choſen friend of her heart. With him they partook that ſoft intercourſe of ſoul which gives to the human mind its higheſt and moſt perfect enjoyment. Without fear or reſtraint they addreſſed each other in the pure and unadulterated language

guage of genuine tenderneſs, indulging in the innocent and fond endearments which the ſincerity of virtuous love will claim, and with which its pureſt votaries might comply without a bluſh.

But how ſhort and tranſitory appeared theſe fleeting moments (on which ſhe thought old time had beſtowed an additional pair of wings) to the agonized mind of the half-diſtracted Roſeline! who, notwithſtanding her father's prohibition, determined in the courſe of the month to inform her mother and brother of every circumſtance that had occurred. She dreaded, more than ſhe would the ſtroke of death, imparting to the unfortunate Walter (ſhe had prevailed on Albert to tell her his Chriſtian name) that he had a rival, who, authoriſed by her father, would endeavour to ſeparate them for ever; and more, much more than for herſelf, ſhe trembled for that hapleſs, perſecuted, unprotected lover, at whoſe boſom fate had already aimed ſome of its moſt pointed

arrows, whoſe life would be endangered, ſhould her partiality be diſcovered—that life on which her own ſeemed to depend: his happineſs, which was dearer to her than her own, reſted with her only to preſerve; if they muſt be parted, the conteſt could not be extended beyond the confines of the grave, and in the friendly grave they ſhould both find ſhelter.

The viſible change, which appeared the next morning in the countenance and manners of Roſeline, was ſuch as thoſe only who determined not to ſee could have avoided obſerving. Edwin, who met her as ſhe was going to enter the breakfaſt-parlour, eagerly cried out, "For heaven's ſake, my dear ſiſter, what, in the name of ill-luck, has happened to you?—how long have you been ill?"

With tender earneſtneſs ſhe begged him not to mention her altered looks, promiſing to acquaint him with the cauſe the firſt convenient

venient opportunity. He agreed to comply with her requeſt, and neither Sir Philip nor Lady de Morney took any notice; and, when the Baron joined the breakfaſt-party, every thing paſſed as uſual. He was very attentive to his fair enſlaver, who, ſeeing her father's eye ſternly fixed upon her from the moment the Baron entered the room, dared not to repel his odious gallantry with the coldneſs and contempt ſhe knew not how to ſuppreſs; but ſhe thought it better to yield ſubmiſſively to the mortifications of the preſent hour, in order to ſecure to herſelf the ſhort reſpite from certain miſery, which upon ſuch painful conditions had been allowed her.

As ſoon as breakfaſt was ended, the Baron and Sir Philip ordered their horſes, and rode out to ſpend the day at ſome diſtance from the caſtle. Lady de Morney withdrew to give directions reſpecting ſome domeſtic arrangements, and the younger part of the family retired to go on with their uſual em-

ployments. Edwin followed his ſiſter to her own apartment, and eagerly requeſted her inſtantly to relieve his mind from the anxiety he could not help feeling on her account, as he was certain ſomething unpleaſant muſt have happened.

Gratified by this proof of his tenderneſs and attention to her happineſs, Roſeline, after a few painful ſtruggles to ſuppreſs her agitation, and having obtained a ſolemn promiſe from her brother, that, however provoked, or whatever indignation he might feel when he became acquainted with her internal and hopeleſs miſery, he would not betray by the moſt diſtant hint that ſhe had diſobeyed the poſitive injuctions of her father, informed him, with many tears, of the Baron's views in coming to the caſtle.

Edwin had long ſuſpected ſomething would ariſe from the frequent conferences of the Baron and his father, and the unuſual reſerve of his mother. He had likewiſe obſerved,

ſerved, with ſome degree of ſurpriſe, the very flattering and uncommon attentions paid to their noble viſitor; he therefore was not ſo much aſtoniſhed as his ſiſter expected he would have been. He carefully avoided filling her mind with unneceſſary alarms at the moment he felt a thouſand fears on her account, and could not reſtrain his indignation at hearing a tale confirmed which appeared too abſurd almoſt to be believed. He tenderly embraced, and vowed to protect her from ſuch cruelty and oppreſſion, ſhould his father continue obſtinately to inſiſt on her giving her hand to a man ſhe diſliked.

He had long known her extreme partiality for the priſoner, which, though he could not approve, his own clandeſtine engagements with Madeline prevented his attempting to condemn. They had innocently and mutually aſſiſted in bringing each other into ſituations which threatened them with many ſorrows; they muſt now in this trying mo-

ment as reſolutely determine to extricate themſelves, and thoſe they loved, from diſtreſſes which otherwiſe would in all probability overwhelm and deſtroy them.

Edwin, at Roſeline's earneſt requeſt, was to inform Walter of the dangers which encompaſſed them, and of the formidable rival who had appeared to interrupt their happineſs; but ſhe inſiſted on his concealing from him the name of that rival, begging him not to give a hint of his fortune or conſequence. Eager to ſave her lover from feeling ſuch pangs as ſhe herſelf had endured, ſhe entreated he would ſoften the ſad tidings he conveyed, by aſſuring him he had nothing to fear from herſelf, as her affection was equally tender and ſincere.

When Edwin had imparted the unwelcome news to the priſoner, though he obſerved the ſtricteſt caution, and worded the heart-wounding communication in language beſt calculated to ſooth and quiet thoſe tormenting

menting apprehenſions, to which it would unavoidably give birth, the effect it had on the unhappy ſufferer was dreadful. His agonies diſcloſed to the aſtoniſhed Edwin the ſtrength of an affection which, while it alarmed him, demanded the utmoſt pity; and, at that moment, had he poſſeſſed the power of diſpoſing of the hand of his ſiſter, he would ſooner have preſented it to his unfortunate friend than to the greateſt monarch upon earth.

Roſeline dared not venture to ſee him for ſeveral ſucceeding hours, and no ſooner were his watchful and impatient eyes gratified by her entrance into his ſolitary apartment, than he haſtily aroſe; and, throwing himſelf at her feet, almoſt inarticulately entreated her to pronounce his doom.

"Tell me, (cried he,) if you, my only earthly treaſure, muſt be wreſted from me for ever? — if I muſt no longer hear the ſoft ſound of that gentle voice, ſweeter and more melodious than celeſtial muſic? I can

die without reproaching, but I cannot exiſt without ſeeing you; and I will never, never live one hour after you have given your hand to another.—Madneſs and torture are united in that thought!— Let us fly,—let us leave this horrid caſtle!— The world is all before us: love ſhall be our guide. Surely we can find one little ſacred ſpot that will ſhelter us from perſecution and tyranny; if not, we can wander, beg, and at laſt die, together."

"Have patience, my generous, my beloved Walter, (cried the weeping Roſeline;)— I yet truſt we ſhall not be reduced to the hard, the degrading neceſſity of taking ſuch deſperate and improper ſteps to preſerve our faith unbroken. Be aſſured of this, and endeavour to reſt ſatisfied with a promiſe I will ever hold ſacred,—that, while you continue the unrivalled poſſeſſor of my heart, only actual force ſhall compel me to give my hand to your rival; and I think I may venture to ſay, if I know any thing of my father's

ther's diſpoſition, unkind as it appears at preſent, he will never go to ſuch unwarrantable and unnatural lengths to gratify an ambition I never ſuſpected had found place in his mind."

"Ah! (ſaid the priſoner) you little know, you cannot ſuſpect to what lengths pride and ambition will carry unfeeling people. I am their victim, and if I thought you were to ſuffer as I have done——"

"Attempt not to think about it," interrupted Roſeline.

"Conſent then to eſcape this very night. If we ſtop to deliberate we are loſt,—we are ſeparated for ever! You know not what ſuch love as mine, when called into action, and bleſt with liberty, would enable me to do, to preſerve a treaſure ſo dear and eſtimable. Albert would go with us: with his direction and aſſiſtance, ſurely we could procure ſufficient from the bowels of the earth to ſupport you in eaſe and plenty, if not in affluence."

The entrance of Albert luckily put an end to a converſation which was become too tender and painful for Roſeline any longer to have kept up that appearance of compoſure which was abſolutely neceſſary to quiet the tormenting apprehenſions of her lover; ſhe therefore immediately availed herſelf of the opportunity to quit his apartment, and retired to her own.

Within rather leſs than a week after Roſeline's interview with her father, the alteration which took place in her was ſuch as could not paſs unobſerved, but it was wholly imputed to indiſpoſition. She became much thinner; the roſe of health was fled from a countenance no longer marked with animation. She had no ſpirits, and was ſeldom ſeen to ſmile; even the playful fondneſs of her ſiſter Bertha ceaſed to intereſt or entertain her.

Lady de Morney, who was a tender mother, became alarmed, and imparted her fears

to

to Sir Philip, who endeavoured to laugh her out of them.

"The poor child (ſaid he) is only a little mother-ſick. She is pining, I ſuppoſe, at the thoughts of leaving mamma: you muſt therefore take no notice, for I ſo well know the ſoftneſs of your diſpoſition, that a few tears will mould you to her own wayward purpoſes, and deprive you of all your reſolution. The unfortunate girl will, to be ſure, be ſadly hurt at becoming a baroneſs, and being placed in a ſituation to which even the proudeſt ambition of her parents could not have aſpired. We, therefore, have only to remain ſilent ſpectators for a time, and leave the natural vanity of her ſex, united with the ſanguine wiſhes of youth, to operate for themſelves. We will invite company to the caſtle; I mean to give a ball in compliment to the Baron:—Roſeline will reign queen of the ceremony; aſſailed by flattery, ſoftened by muſic, exhilirated by exerciſe, ſhe will forget to ſigh in the midſt

of gaiety, and ceaſe to diſapprove the Baron, when ſhe begins to feel that conſequence which the being noticed by a man of his rank will give to her."

"Let us then try the experiment as ſoon as poſſible, (replied Lady de Morney;) for I cannot help thinking, unleſs ſome change takes place for the better, our ſweet Roſeline, inſtead of bridal finery, will want only a winding ſheet, and that ſhe will be removed from the caſtle to her grave."

Sir Philip was diſpleaſed; he inſtantly left the room in order to avoid returning an anſwer which he well knew would have been ſucceeded by an altercation with his wife.—She ſaw he was angry, and therefore, though ſhe was extremely anxious on her daughter's account, ſhe determined for ſome time to remain a paſſive obſerver, let what would be the conſequence; but ſhe did not experience that ſerenity of mind at forming this reſolution which ſhe had done on ſome former occaſions, when ſhe had ſacrificed her

her own will to that of her huſband; for, aſpiring as ſhe was by nature, and much as ſhe was always attached to the gaudy trappings of grandeur and the alluring ſounds of title, ſhe felt the life of her daughter, when put in competition with them, or even the throne itſelf, was of infinitely more importance.

De Huntingfield was at this time abſent from the caſtle. Elwyn very ſeldom mixed with his brother officers; therefore De Clavering, De Willows, and Hugh Camelford, were often left to meſs by themſelves, the Baron not appearing to like being much in their ſociety. They were too young and too pleaſing in his opinion, and, as he could not help ſometimes making compariſons not much to his own advantage, it was natural for him to think the young ladies might do the ſame. As the three gentlemen were returning from a walk, they ſaw the Baron, Sir Philip, his ſon, and daughters, going out for one. Obſerving the apparent reluctant

ſtep

ſtep and pale countenance of Roſeline, as ſhe walked by the ſide of her ſtately and venerable lover, and having picked up ſome hints which had been dropped at different times of the projected alliance, De Clavering, with ſome little indignation, exclaimed, "It will never do;—I ſee it will never do:—the girl's ſpirits are too low, her uncorrupted mind too pure, and her ſtomach too weak, to digeſt ſo much pride and acid as that old fellow has in his compoſition. His love ſeems to have operated on her feelings as being ſo nearly allied to miſery, that ſhe has already caught the infection, and I wiſh in the end it may not prove an incurable diſeaſe. Upon my ſoul I do not wonder at it, for he acts upon my nerves like a torpedo, or rather as the Greek fire did upon our armies, exciting both fear and indignation."

"By heaven! (ſaid De Willows,) the folly and ambition of parents, in reſpect to their children, are, in my opinion, the moſt unaccountable of human abſurdities. They

They form plans from their own paſſions and feelings, and then expect that young people can adopt them at their command, without making any allowance for the material difference between the ſentiments, opinions, and inclinations, of nineteen and ſixty."

"Suppoſe we all talk to the covernor, and toſs the Paron into the rifer. A coot tucking might trive all the flames and darts of luf out of his pody, and reſtore the poor cirl from the crave, to which the toctor is for ſending her like a tog, without giving time for Chriſtian burial!"

"To argue, or contend with ſuch characters (ſaid De Clavering) would be like oppoſing a fiddle againſt thunder, or a ſquirt againſt a cataract in Switzerland."

"Then, on my ſoul, (replied Camelford,) you muſt take the Paron's pody under your own tirection. With your regimen, and a few of your teviliſh experiments, you will, Cot willing, ſoon diſpatch him and his luf into another world."

"That,

"That, indeed, Hugh, would prove an effectual cure; but, in reſpect to the Baron, it would not be quite ſo eaſily accompliſhed; for I look upon him ſtill to poſſeſs a conſtitution that would ſet phyſic and even the doctor himſelf at defiance.—He ſeems formed to wreſtle ſturdily with death before he will be vanquiſhed, or yield the conteſt."

"If you can once lay hold of him, and kif him ſome of your pills and potions, he would ſoon be clad to gif up the coaſt."

"What, then, (ſaid De Clavering) you think me more dangerous than love?—That little, ſubtle, and revengeful god will one day bring you upon your knees before his ſhrine for the affront put upon his all ſubduing influence."

"He had petter let me alone, (replied the Cambrian;) I am not ſo plind as his tivine highneſs, and will nefer worſhip any cot put the crate Cot of heaven. Eteliza has taught you petter, De Willows: that

girl's tell-tale eyes petray that luf has been puſy with more than one perſon."

De Clavering laughed at this unexpected attack upon his friend, who felt a painful conſciouſneſs that Camelford had more reaſon for his obſervation than he wiſhed, the partiality of the artleſs Edeliza being too viſible to be longer miſtaken. On his own part, he had, from the firſt ſeeing Madeline, cheriſhed an increaſing affection for her, while her uniform and unaffected coldneſs, with the preference ſhe had ſhewn to another, too well convinced him he had nothing to hope; neither could he any longer affect to be blind to the mutual attachment which ſubſiſted between her and his friend Edwin, the latter having made no attempt to deny it; but, being ſatisfied of the honour of De Willows, had in part entruſted him with the wiſhes he determined to encourage, notwithſtanding the inſurmountable obſtacles that appeared to preclude the moſt diſtant ray of hope.

"That

"That ſame love, of which you are thinking and talking, (ſaid De Clavering,) has ſo many devilifications in its train, I am determined to have nothing to do with it, till it becomes more rational, and can be reduced into a regular ſyſtem, by which we poor ſhort-ſighted mortals may find directions how to act, without expoſing ourſelves to ridicule or diſappointment. I am inclined to think I ſhall one day or other be tempted to marry, but it ſhall be to a woman who will take care to keep ſuch ear-wig ſort of fellows as you at a proper diſtance.—You tell fine tales, are all ſmoothneſs and deceit,— like a ſnail can give a gloſs to the path you crawl over, and then leave ſuch traces of your deceptive and invidious progreſs as cannot be concealed. Let the ſubject of your next ſatire, De Willows, be the male flirt,—an animal more dangerous than a tyger."

"Why ſo?" aſked De Willows, determined not to apply the hint which he well knew was deſigned for him.

"Can

"Can there (ſaid De Clavering) be found a character more deſerving ſatire?—a thing that borrows the form of man to diſgrace the name,—an adept in mean ſtratagems and miſchievous devices,—inſenſible to the admonitions of conſcience,—well verſed in all the practices of refined cruelty,—working like a mole in the dark, in order more effectually to enſnare the youthful heart of unſuſpecting innocence, and that merely to gratify the vicious vanity of the moment; and, after he has ſacrificed the health, happineſs, and perhaps the life, of a young woman, who, by her tender nature, he has beguiled of peace, he laughs at her credulous folly, and boldly declares he had never any thought of making her his wife. That there are ſuch men, who, under the ſacred ſemblance of honour, can act thus deſpicably, I have, in the form of one once dear to me as life, unhappily experienced, and from that moment I became the friend and champion of the ſex, and in bold defiance to all ſuch deceivers, I throw down my gauntlet."

"How,

"How, in the name of Cot, came you to be ſo valiant, (cried Camelford,) as to think of fighting tuels for other people's pranks?"

"Becauſe many of the fair ſex are too gentle to vindicate themſelves, too artleſs for ſuſpicion, and too lovely to fall a ſacrifice, without arming the hand of courage to avenge their injuries; for I think the man, who can trifle with the peace of a fellow creature, may be juſtly compared to one of the exhalations of hell, ſent to deſtroy and lay waſte the ſmall portion of happineſs allotted to our mortal pilgrimage."

"You are warm, (ſaid De Willows, confuſedly;) perhaps I have undeſignedly given you pain, without knowing I interfered with the wiſhes or pretenſions of any one. On my honour, I never had any; but, on a ſubject ſo important, I cannot ſpeak coolly, or canvaſs it with indifference. I will be frank, and own I admire Edeliza; and, were her heart as much in my power as I fear it is in

in your's, no man with impunity ſhould wreſt it from me."

"Well ſaid, my prave toctor, (cried Camelford;) little tan Cupit muſt next take care of himſelf, or you will be after tiſſecting his cotſhip; and, though the poor cot is as plind as a peetle, you will be for couching his eyes, till he can ſee as clear as yourſelf."

A ſervant came to invite them to ſup with the governor and his party, which luckily put an end to a converſation that was become unpleaſant. It made De Willows rather uncomfortable and ſmall in his own opinion, and compelled him to reflect more ſeriouſly on the ſubject than he had ever done before. Of Madeline it was folly to think any longer. If Edwin, who was beloved, dared not hope being bleſt with her hand, without the interference of a miracle, what chance could there be of his ſucceeding, for whom ſhe felt only the coldeſt indifference? He determined to take his heart ſeverely to taſk, and to——but it was impoſſible for him

at

at that moment to tell how he ſhould diſpoſe of a heart which had received ſo many wounds, that it ſcarcely retained any of its native unmutilated form; but, on a more ſerious examination, he found a ſomething lurking in it that made him feel very reluctant to give up his pleaſant and intereſting intercourſe with the tender and artleſs Edeliza, which long habit had rendered more neceſſary to his happineſs than he was aware of

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

THE deſign of Sir Philip, in giving a ball, was this evening made known, and the next day meſſages were ſent out to invite the company for that day week. Preparations were inſtantly begun, and new dreſſes ordered. Madeline and Agnes de Clifford obtained leave to be of the party, and ſeveral of the inhabitants of Bungay were highly pleaſed by receiving invitations. Roſeline, on whoſe account, as much as the Baron's, it was given, was the leaſt gratified. Any ſcene of cheerfulneſs to her was become a ſcene

a ſcene of miſery. Her ſpirits depreſſed, her mind, itſelf a chaos of contending paſſions, could not admit a ſingle ray of hope or comfort to chaſe away the gloom which there prevailed. She no longer felt either pleaſure or conſolation in her ſtolen interviews with her beloved Walter, which once afforded her ſuch indeſcribable ſatisfaction.

They now ſaw each other with a tender deſpondence, which ſerved to deprive them of that reſolution which could alone ſupport them in thoſe trials which no longer appeared at a diſtance, and Roſeline, ſinking under the burthen of her own ſorrows, felt herſelf totally unable to ſhare in thoſe which equally overpowered her unfortunate lover, from whoſe priſon ſhe never went, but he concluded it was the laſt time he ſhould be indulged with ſeeing her.

Walter heard of the ball, which was to be given in compliment to his rival, with that kind of contempt and trembling indignation

nation which a brave officer feels at ſeeing ſome upſtart ſtripling ſtepping over his head to preferment, and, by dint of mere adventitious events, obtaining authority to lead thoſe whom he dared not have followed. It has always been ſaid that the ſincereſt love could not exiſt without hope. In this inſtance, however, the aſſertion did not hold good; for, though hope was loſt, love maintained its empire, and, environed with deſpair, loſt none of that tender energy which had united two hearts under circumſtances the moſt extraordinary, and in a ſituation the moſt alarming and diſtreſſing.

The conduct of Sir Philip de Morney ſurpriſed all thoſe who were let into the ſecret of the projected alliance. The Baron's pride appeared to have infected him with a mania of the ſame kind; and the unpleaſant change it produced was not more inimical to the happineſs of others than he ſoon found it proved to his own. He was

now ſeldom greeted with the ſmile of affection: he ſaw looks of diſtreſs, and heard the ſigh of diſcontent vibrate on his ear; and, whilſt he condemned the obſtinacy of others, determined reſolutely to perſevere in his own.

How much is it to be lamented, that, with all the knowledge he acquires, man knows ſo little of himſelf! How aſtoniſhing that a ſudden and unexpected change in his proſpects, or ſituation, ſhould inſtantaneouſly work ſo unaccountable a revolution in his feelings, that he ſcarcely retains any recollection of his former diſpoſitions!—and, ſtill more ſtrange it appears, that, while adverſity ſerves to exalt the mind and purify the heart, proſperity ſhould harden and debaſe them.

About forty of thoſe who had been invited to the ball returned anſwers that they would do themſelves the honour of accepting the invitation. Roſeline became ſo much

much changed in her looks, appearance, and manner, that at length the alteration ſtruck the Baron, and he mentioned it to Sir Philip. This produced a ſecond warm altercation between him and Roſeline, which ended as the former had done, namely, in the want of reſolution, ſtrength, and ſpirits, on her part, to contend longer on a ſubject ſo painful to her feelings, and ſo inimical to all her hopes of happineſs; for Sir Philip now inſiſted, and that with a degree of unfeeling ferocity, that ſhe ſhould give her hand to the Baron within ten days after the month was expired which he had ſo fooliſhly allowed to her perverſe folly and caprice.

Of this interview Roſeline ſaid nothing to her brother or the priſoner, but felt that her fortitude deſerted her as time ſtole away, and, with the deprivation of health and ſpirits, threatened to leave her an uncontending and helpleſs victim to the authority ſhe began to doubt having power

to reſiſt. Still ſhe determined, if dragged by force to the altar, ſhe would reſolutely and openly, before its ſacred front, declare not only her unwillingneſs to become the wife of the Baron, but her repugnance and averſion to the monaſtic life.

At length the anxiouſly-expected, the long-wiſhed for evening arrived, and produced an aſſemblage of as much elegance, grace, wit, and beauty, as had ever been collected together in ſo confined a circle.—From the ſocial town of Bungay ſome very lovely young women made their firſt appearance at the caſtle, decorated to the utmoſt advantage, and juſtly entitled to diſpute the palm of beauty with many found in the higher ranks.

On this occaſion, it is not to be doubted but they cheriſhed hopes that their charms would conquer ſome of the young officers appointed to guard the fortreſs, on which the

the ſafety of themſelves and the town depended.

From the earlieſt ages of the world, the old adage prevailed,—"None but the brave deſerve the fair," while the military dreſs, ſhining ſword, and becoming cockade, were ever found uſeful auxiliaries in aſſiſting their wearer to find eaſy acceſs to the female heart.

When the dancing was ordered to begin, the Baron, arrayed moſt ſuperbly, took out Roſeline, and led her to the upper end of the room. De Willows followed, leading Edeliza, who was dreſt in the moſt becoming and captivating ſtile, and looked ſo enchantingly beautiful, that he wondered he had ever beheld her with indifference, or preferred another. Her expreſſive eyes told a tale ſo correſpondent to the feelings of his own heart, as completed its conqueſt, and the captivity was found ſo pleaſing and eaſy, it never afterwards wiſhed

to regain its freedom. Edwin danced with the gentle Madeline; Hugh Camelford with Bertha, and the reſt of the party diſpoſed of themſelves as their vanity or inclination prompted.

The dancing was begun with avidity and ſpirit, which ſome very excellent muſic ſerved to heighten and keep up. The Baron not ungracefully exhibited his well-dreſſed perſon, and this great perſonage had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing that the eyes of the company were chiefly fixed upon him who had procured them this unexpected indulgence,—a circumſtance unuſual in an age when expenſive pleaſures were confined to the higher ranks of life, and by that means leſs coveted by thoſe in inferior ſtations, which certainly tended to the good of ſociety in general, as it ſerved to render all parties contented with their lot. We now often ſee, with pity and regret, if young people are thrown by chance into

into a walk of life ſome degrees higher than their habitual one, they ſeldom know how to return to their former humble path without diſcontent and regret, which will too often lead them to ſacrifice virtue, and every real good, for the frivolous nonſenſe of dreſs and the parade of ceremony, while, to obtain the enjoyment of pleaſures deſtructive to time and real happineſs, they will give up their peace of mind, nor repent the poor bargain they have made ſo long as they can live in ſtile.

Some few pitied, but a far greater number envied Roſeline for having made ſo important a conqueſt, and were ſurpriſed to ſee how little ſhe was animated amidſt the exhilirating ſcene of gaiety and ſplendor, wholly occupying the attention of one of the firſt barons in the kingdom, whoſe ſmile by moſt people would be reckoned an honour, and whoſe frown among many was deſtruction from which there was often no appeal.

Every rarity that could be procured was ſet before the party. Hoſpitality and feſtivity went hand in hand, and, to a careleſs and unintereſted ſpectator, it would have ſeemed that univerſal happineſs prevailed; but it was far otherwiſe. Happineſs is ſeldom found amidſt a crowd. In the more retired ſcenes of ſerene unambitious enjoyment, we have a much better chance of finding that rara avis, and of retaining it in our poſſeſſion, if poſſible to be found.

Sir Philip de Morney was tormented with fears that the obſtinacy of his daughter would diſappoint his ambition, while the tenderneſs of her mother had ſo far ſubdued the influence of her pride, that, to ſee her daughter reſtored to her former health and ſpirits, ſhe would gladly have yielded up the honour of an alliance with the Baron.

The

The artleſs unaſpiring Roſeline, before ſhe was brought into notice by the proud attentions of her noble admirer, was a far happier being than ſhe found herſelf at the moment ſhe was looked up to as an object of envy; but the ſimple dreſs ſhe had been accuſtomed to wear was more conformable to her own unadulterated taſte than the ſplendid habiliments with which ſhe was now loaded, and which the pride, or deſign, of her father had procured to throw a veil over her ſenſes, and tempt her to purchaſe thoſe ſtill more brilliant at the expence of her peace; yet, notwithſtanding all the faſcinating allurements with which ſhe ſaw herſelf ſurrounded, the court, adulation, and reſpect, paid to her, the eagerneſs of the company to obtain a ſhare in her notice, her heart remained with Walter, the unknown ſtranger, who belonged to no one,—who was without fortune, and deprived of that freedom which is the birthright of the pooreſt peaſant; nevertheleſs

Walter, in a gloomy and ſolitary priſon, was an object more captivating and far more valuable in her eyes than the lordly Baron in a ſtately caſtle.

When they had danced about half an hour after ſupper, the Baron apologized to Roſeline for withdrawing to make ſome alteration in his dreſs, which he found unpleaſant. She felt herſelf gratified by this temporary abſence, and took the opportunity of chatting with ſome of her young companions. Deeply engaged in converſation with Madeline and Agnes de Clifford, ſhe did not obſerve that her father was ſuddenly called out of the room, and requeſted by the ſervant in a whiſper to haſten with the utmoſt ſpeed to the apartment of his friend.

Too much ſurpriſed to inquire the cauſe, he inſtantly obeyed the ſummons. On his entrance, I will leave my readers to gueſs how much he muſt have been alarmed and ſhocked

ſhocked at ſeeing that friend extended on the floor, with every appearance of death on his countenance. After trying various methods to recover him without effect, he ordered one of his people to call De Clavering to his aſſiſtance, who, by ſome powerful and proper applications, ſoon produced ſigns of life, but it was near an hour before any of ſenſe returned. He neither ſeemed to know where he was, nor why he ſaw ſo many people about him. At length, however, he recovered his recollection,—ſaid he had been very ill, but found himſelf better, and requeſted to be left a few minutes in private with Sir Philip de Morney, whom he beckoned to ſit down by the ſide of the bed on which he was laid.

The room being cleared, and the door faſtened, to prevent interruption, the Baron graſped the hand of his friend, and in a hurried tone, at the ſame time looking around him with terror, informed him that he had ſeen a ſpirit. "It ſtood there!" pointing

pointing with his finger to a particular part of the room Sir Philip appeared incredulous, and his looks were not miſunderſtood.

"Believe me, (continued the Baron,) it was no deluſion of the ſenſes. I actually ſaw the ghoſt of my firſt wife as ſurely as I now ſee you, and as perfectly as ever I ſaw her when alive. She glided out of the apartment the moment I entered it to change my dreſs, which I found too heavy for dancing. She looked diſpleaſed, frowned ſternly upon me, and ſhook her head as ſhe diſappeared. Her countenance was as blooming, and retained the ſame beauty and expreſſion as when I led her in triumph to the altar twenty years ago."

"Surely, my lord, (ſaid Sir Philip,) this ſuppoſed viſionary appearance muſt be the effects of the diſorder which attacked you ſo violently, that it led De Clavering, as well as myſelf, to tremble for your life."

"Say

"Say rather, (replied the Baron,) and then you will ſay right, the diſorder was occaſioned by the terror, which, in that moment, indeed deprived me of my ſenſes.—If I ſee you at this time, I then beheld the face, form, and features, of my once-loved Iſabella, of whom I was deprived by death in the infancy of my happineſs, ſix months after ſhe had given birth to a ſon, of whom the ſame inexorable tyrant robbed me in the fourth year of my ſecond marriage."

Sir Philip found it was uſeleſs to contend with his friend on a ſubject in which he ſo obſtinately perſevered; and, though he was ſatisfied that the fright was merely the effect of diſeaſe, he thought it wiſeſt to confine his diſbelief to his own boſom, and drop the converſation as ſoon as poſſible. He inſiſted on remaining with him the reſt of the night, and cheriſhed hopes that by the morning this unaccountable vagary would be forgotten, or only remembered as a ſud-

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den delirium, occaſioned perhaps by heat, and the unuſual exerciſe in which he had been engaged. His offer of ſitting up was cordially accepted, and the two gentlemen agreed it would be right and prudent to ſay as little about the ghoſt as poſſible, Sir Philip ſecretly trembling leſt the Baron's unfortunate whim ſhould operate ſo powerfully upon his feelings as to prevent his fulfilling at engagements with Roſeline.

This ſtrange circumſtance occaſioned ſo much confuſion and hurry in the caſtle, that the party ſeparated much earlier than they wiſhed, and every one accounted, as their own humour dictated, for the ſudden indiſpoſition of the Baron. One or two, mortified by their pleaſure being ſo unſeaſonably curtailed, ſaid the old man had better have gone to bed at eight o'clock, or not have attempted dancing in a ball-room when he was dancing on the verge of the grave.

Sir

Sir Philip, with two ſervants, ſat with the Baron during the night, and in the morning De Clavering found him ſo much recovered, that he adviſed him to get into the air, as that, with moderate exerciſe, he ventured to pronounce would perfect his recovery, and he would have nothing to fear from a relapſe, if he kept himſelf compoſed; but that ſame compoſure the Baron did not find quite ſo eaſy to acquire as De Clavering imagined.

The awful appearance he had ſeen was not one moment from his remembrance: it ſtill flitted before his mental ſight, and his tortured mind preſented only Iſabella to his view. She had frowned upon him, ſhaken her head, and vaniſhed with a look of anger and contempt: with this regretted and beloved wife he had paſſed by far the happieſt moments of his life. She was the firſt, and indeed the only, woman he had really loved, notwithſtanding the world had unjuſtly branded him with being an unkind

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and moroſe huſband. It had in that reſpect dealt by him with the ſame injuſtice it had done by a thouſand others. The delicate frame of Iſabella was waſting in a rapid decline, from the moment ſhe became a mother. He had adored her, and watched her as his richeſt treaſure during the few months ſhe had lingered with him, after having preſented him with a ſon: ſhe expired in his arms, and the ſevereſt pang ſhe felt was being torn from them for ever. Why ſhe ſhould riſe from the grave, why ſhe ſhould frown upon him, who had loved her ſo ſincerely, he could neither comprehend nor reconcile to his feelings.

With his ſecond wife he had lived ſeveral years; but all the happineſs he had found in the courſe of them was not to be compared with that which he had enjoyed with his gentle Iſabella, in the ſhort time he had been indulged with the pleaſure of calling her his own.

By

By the ſecond lady, he had ſeveral children, and it was the death of an only ſurviving ſon, at the age of ſixteen, on whom ſhe had doated with an almoſt unpardonable fondneſs, which had occaſioned her own.

Having thus been deprived of two wives, and bereaved of his children, without having any near relations for whom he felt thoſe prevailing and powerful affections which could lead him to practiſe ſelf-denial on their account, he juſtly conſidered himſelf at liberty to endeavour to find happineſs in the way to which his ideas of it were annexed, and therefore made choice of the daughter of his friend, Sir Philip, to ſhare his fortune, and inherit ſuch a part of it as he ſhould find her worthy to poſſeſs, if ſhe did not bring him thoſe who would have a more rightful claim to it.

He had no ſooner recovered the ſhock and terror which he had ſo awfully and

unaccountably experienced, than he determined to perſevere, and accelerate all the neceſſary preparations for the completion of his marriage.

He was now eager to quit Bungay-Caſtle, and to return with the moſt convenient ſpeed to his own, as he could not entirely diveſt himſelf of apprehenſion, that he might receive another unpleaſant viſit from his Iſabella, whom, much as he had ſincerely loved and admired when living, he did not now wiſh ſhould leave her grave to interrupt thoſe pleaſures which he anticipated from the nature of his preſent engagements.

Sir Philip, who from the firſt had ſuſpected the Baron's alarm and ſubſequent terror to have originated from a more natural (however unaccountable) cauſe than that to which he ſo obſtinately imputed it, made all the inquiries he dared riſk, without giving his reaſons for ſo doing; but, notwithſtanding

notwithſtanding his moſt artful endeavours, the myſtery remained unexplained, and he was obliged to leave it to time, or chance, to develope.

END OF VOL. I.

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